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THE
VRĀTYAS IN ANCIENT INDIA

BY

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Dedicated

to

*my revered **Guru**, Dr. Kalikinkar Datta, M. A., P.R.S., Ph. D.,*

Vice-Chancellor, Magadh University,

Bodh Gaya.

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PREFACE

The need for a scholarly and comprehensive account of the Vrātyas has long been felt. The history of the Vratyas is in itself a subject of surpassing interest. The past is not dead in India. Nobody familiar with the history of India can help feeling that under the thin veneer of modern renaissance age-old forces are at work. It is hoped that the present publication will help focus the interest of indological scholarship on a subject to which it has not paid as much attention as it deserves. An attempt has been made here in coordinating and interpreting the enormous and widely scattered materials which have been made available to all those who may feel attracted to the story of one of the most brilliant episodes of ancient India, specially of the Vedic age. True, no reliable Vrātya chronicles are available except the Vratyakhaṇḍa of the Atharva Veda. When the German indologists acquired an interest in this subject, some of them attempted to weave the materials at hand into a string of connected tale and in this respect Hauer's Der Vrātya stands unique. Valuable as it is in many respects in the German language, it does not seem to have been used by scholars (other than German language groups) and has therefore been a sealed book for many.

In my humble study of the subject, I have attempted to satisfy the needs of critical scholarship and to make it interesting and readable. The dissertation has been prepared on the basis of all available sources. An attempt has been made to make it a completely documented work keeping in view the famous historical

adage "no document, no history" Every important statement of fact is supported by authoritative reference, though in all cases the final decision has been made by me and I alone am responsible for any error or eccentricities in judgement or otherwise. The theme has been presented by a proper sociological method in the light of various myths and religions and conforming to a rational frame of social order. Here is a critical examination of forces that have moulded the institutions of ancient India.

The cult of the Vrātyas seems to belong to the earliest civilisation of India and was once widespread among the indigenous peoples, necessitating conversion through prescribed ceremony. The term 'Vratya' was possibly a collective name given to a group of people whose way of life was different from those who claimed to be Aryans. As the primitive peoples of India they seem to have contributed much to the growth and development of Indian Culture. The work is divided into five chapters and deals with the different aspects of the history and culture of the Vrātyas.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to most esteemed friend, Dr R S. Sharma, Professor and Head of the Department of History, Patna University, who, very kindly procured for me a copy of Hauer's book from U K and also for his various suggestions and advice. Principal S N. Singh of G D College, Begusarai, deserves thanks for his constant encouragement in all my research projects. I have no words to thank Dr. Upendra Thakur of the Department of Ancient Indian history and Archaeology of the Patna University, my erstwhile colleague, who has seen the book through the press and has helped me in various other ways. Prof Vishwanāth Jhā Śāstri, of the Department of English, C. M. College, Darbhanga, Prof Shaktidhar Jha,

of the Department of Sanskrit G D College, Begusarai, and Pandit Surendra Shastri always came to my rescue whenever any important passage of Sanskrit came in for criticism and interpretation. Even in such cases of interpretation, the responsibility is completely mine. I am also obliged to all the pioneers in the field and I shall be failing in my duty if I do not pay my respects to my Purvachāryas. My thanks are also due to Shri Rajeshwar Jha of the Bihar Research Society who placed at my disposal all the relevant books and Journals required for the purpose. In spite of my best efforts, printing mistakes, here and there, could not be removed. I am very much thankful to my wife who kept me relieved of family anxiety and thereby enabled me to proceed with my research. Finally I am thankful to Messrs Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras, for having kindly undertaken to publish the book.

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Begusarai,
15-3 1964

Radhakrishna Choudhary

ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI—Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute,
(Poona .

AI —Ancient India (Delhi)

AIOC —All India Oriental Congress (Poona)

Ait Br , *AB* —Aiteriya Brāhmaṇa

AA —Aiteriya Aranyaka

Ang N —Anguttara Nikāya

Anu p , *Anuśāsana P* —Anuśāsana Parva

Āp Dh S —Āpastamba Dharmasūtra (*ADS*)

Ap Gr S —Āpastamba Grhyasūtra (also *AGS*)

Āp, Śr S —Āpastamba Śrautasūtra (also *APSS*)

Aś —Arthaśāstra

ASR, ĀSRAR —Archaeological Survey (of India—Annual Report)
Report

ĀSS —Ānandaśrama Sanskrit Series

Āśv Gr S —Āśvalayana Gṛhasūtra

Āśv Śr S —Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra (also *ASS*)

AV —Atharvaveda

BA —Bhartiya Anuśilana

Bau Dh S —Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra (also *BDS*)

Bau dh Śr S —Baudhayana Śrautasūtra (also *BSS*)

Bau Gr S —Baudhayana Grhyasūtra

Bhar Gr S —Bhardwāja Grhyasūtra

Bhāg P (Bhagavata) —Bhagavata Purāṇa

Brahmānda —Brahmānda Purāṇa

Bhaviṣya P —Bhaviṣya Purāṇa

BD —Brhaddevata

BI —Bibliotheca Indica

Brhaspati (Br) —Brhaspati Smṛiti

Br P (Brahmānda P) —Brahmānda Purāṇa

Br Samhita —Brhat Samhita

Br Up (Brh Upn) —Brhadaranyaka Upaniṣad

BR —Bothlingk and Roth

BSS —Baudhayana Śrauta Sutra

Chān Up (Chāndogya Upn) —Chandogya Upaniṣad

CHI —Cambridge History of India

CII —Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum

- CR*—Calcutta Review
Digha N —Digha Nikāya. (also *DN*)
DPPN—Dictionary of Pali Proper names
DkA—Dynasties of the Kali Age
EB—Encyclopaedia Britannica
ED Edited, Edition
EI—Epigraphia Indica
ERE—Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics
Garuda P —Garuda Purana
Gaut Dh S —Gautama Dharma Sutra
GOS —Gaekwad Oriental Series
Gopath B —Gopatha Brāhmaṇa
Gobhila Gṛh S —Gobhila Grhyasutra
HCIP —History and Culture of the Indian People.
HOS —Harvard Oriental Series
HGS —Hārta Grhyasūtra
HSS —Hiranyakeśina Śrautasūtra
IA —Indian Antiquary (Bombay)
IALC —Indo Aryan Literature and Culture
IC —Indian Culture (Calcutta)
IHQ —Indian Historical Quarterly (Calcutta)
Ind Alt—Indische Alterthumskunde.
Jalm —Jaimini Mīmāṃsā Sūtra
JAOS —Journal of the American Oriental Society, (Baltimore)
JASB—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, (Calcutta)
JBBRAS—Journal of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, (Bombay)
JBORS—Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, (Patna).
JBU—Journal of the Bombay University.
JBRs—Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Patna
JB Jalm-Br.—Jaimini Brāhmaṇa.
JIH—Journal of Indian History
JOR—Journal of Oriental Research, (Madras)
JOI—Journal of the Oriental Institute, (Baroda)
JRAS—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, (London)
JRASB (L)—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal Letters (Calcutta)

- JISOA**—Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.
JDL—Journal of the Department of Letters (Calcutta).
Jaim-Up. (Upn.)—Jaimini Upanisad.
KA—Kausitaki Aranyaka.
Kalki P.—Kalki Purāṇa.
Kāt. Sr. S. (Kss)—Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra; *Kss*; (*K*)-Kāsi ed.
Kāmandaka—Kāmandaka Nitisāra.
Kap. S—Kapisthala Samhitā.
Kām. S. (Ks)—Kāmasūtra.
Kath. S.—Kāthaka Samhitā.
Kaṭho-Upn—Kaṭhupanisada.
Kautilya—Kautilya's Arthaśāstra.
LSS (Lāty. S. S.)—Lātyāna Śrautasūtra.
Majj. N. (Majjhima N.)—Majjhima Nikāya.
Manu—Manusmṛiti.
Mark. P. (Mārkaṇḍey)—Mārkaṇḍey Purāṇa.
Matsy. P.—Matsya Purāṇa.
MBH—Mahābhārata.
MS—Maitrayāṇi Samhita (also *Mait. S.*)
MI—Man in India (Ranchi).
ML—Magadhan Literature.
MASI—Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey.
Nārada—Nārada Smṛiti.
NS—New Series.
Padma. P.—Padma Purāṇa.
Pāṇini—Pāṇini's Grammar.
PB (Panch-Vimśa)—Panch Vimśa Brāhmaṇa—also sometimes
 used for Prabuddha Bhārata in the footnotes only.
Pār. Gr. S. (PGS)—Pāraskar Gṛhyasūtra.
Patañjali—Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali.
PE—Pillar Edict.
PHAI—Political History of Ancient India.
PTS—Pāli Text Society.
PASB—Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Calcutta).
PAIOC—Proceedings of the All India Oriental Congress.
PIHC—Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.
Pras. Upn—Prasnopanishad.
PI—Purāṇa Index.

- Ram*—Rāmayana.
RV, *Rkveda*—Rigveda
RV—Raghuvamśa.
RPVU—Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanisadas
S 4IC—Some aspects of Ancient Indian Culture.
Samy N. (*Samyukta*)—Samyukta-Nikāya.
SA—Śamkhāyana Aranyaka
Śamkha Gr. S (*SGS*)—Śamkhāyana Grhyasūtra.
Śamkh Śr S (*SSS*)—Śamkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra
Sat Bra (*SB*)—Satpatha Brāhmana.
SBE—Sacred Book of the East
Svet Upn—Śvetāsvatara Upanisad
Satyāsāra—Satyasādha Śrauta Sūtra
SBB—Sacred Books of the Buddhists
Skanda P.—Skanda Purāna.
Sut Nipata—Sutta Nipāta.
Taitt Aranyaka—Taittirīya Aranyaka.
Taitt. Br (*TB*)—Taittirīya Brahmana.
TMB also *TB*)—Tandya Mahābrāhmana or Brāhmanas.
Tr.—Translated.
Taitt Sam (*TS*)—Taittirīya Samhitā.
Upn—Upanisad.
VA—Vedic Age.
Vāy P. (*Vāyu*)—Vāyu Purāna.
Vas Dh S—Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra.
Vasīsthā—Vasiṣṭha Smṛiti
VI—Vedic Index.
Vinaya—Vinaya Pīṭaka.
Viṣn. P.—Viṣṇu Purāna.
Viṣnu—Viṣṇu Smṛiti.
VS—Vājasenayī Samhitā (*also Vāj Sam*).
VSS—Vrātyatā Sudhisamgrah
Vrātyas—Absorption of the Vrātyas.
WZKM—Weiner Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
Yājñ—Yājñavalkya Smṛiti.
ZDMG—Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft,
 schaft, (Berlin

Roman equivalents of Nagari Letters

अ	a	द	ḍa
आ	ā	ढ	ḍha
इ	i	ण	ṇa
ई	ī	त	ta
उ	u	थ	tha
ऊ	ū	द	da
ए	e	ध	dha
ऐ	ai	न	na
ओ	o	प	pa
औ	au	फ	pha
ऋ	ṛ (ri)	ब	ba
क	ka	भ	bha
ख	kha	म	ma
ग	ga	य	ya
घ	gha	र	ra
ङ	ṅ	ल	la
च	cha (c)	व	va
छ	chha	श	śa
ज	ja	ष	ṣa (sh)
झ	jha	स	sa
ञ	ñ	ह	ha
ट	ṭa	अनुस्वार (')	m̐ (ṁ)
ठ	ṭha	विसर्ग (:)	ḥ



THE VRĀTYAS IN ANCIENT INDIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I

Of the various problems still facing the Indologists, there is one, deserving special study on scientific lines, of the status and position of the Vratyas in Ancient India. Though scholars all over the world have discussed this problem in their own way in different *journals* and *books*, the mysterious character of the problem remains where it was. The 15th Khanda of the *Atharvaveda* is yet a mystery to most of us and any attempt to give a scientific interpretation of the Vrātya hymns is welcome. Indologists all over the world are grateful to Dr J W Hauer for his brilliant and penetrating analysis of the subject in his famous book "*Der Vratya*". Even his treatment of the subject is, more or less, an intelligent compilation and a good interpretation of different texts and accepted views on the subject and it is interspersed with some conclusions here and there. For the present, Dr. Hauer's study, though incomplete, is the only work in any language on the subject. A summary of Dr. Hauer's findings has been published in the *Bhārtiya Anusilana* (in Hindi).

The study of the subject centres round the *Vrātyakānda* of the *Atharvaveda*. The main point, engaging our attention here, is that had the problem been of a purely mystic nature, as Śrī Sampurnānanda thinks, it should not have engaged the attention of so many scholars here and abroad. The *Smritis*, *Sūtras*, *Brāhmaṇas* and other sources have also touched the problem and have thrown sufficient light on the nature of the subject. The following studies on the *Vrātya* problem deserve mention —

- (1) *Der Vratya*—J W Hauer
- (2) *Einige Bruchstücke der Vrātya Spekulation*—J W Hauer—in the *Winternitz Commemoration Volume* of 1933
- (3) *Vrātyasamasyā*—in the *Bhārṭiya Anusilana* (G S Ojha Commemoration Volume—1934)
- (4) R G Ojha—*Vrātyastoma*—in the *Dayānanda Commemoration Volume* (1933)
- (5) V M Apte—*The importance of the conception of Vrata in social and religious life of the Rigvedic Aryans and its bearing on the problem of Vratyas*, in the *AIOC—XI* (Hyderabad Session)
- (6) A Chakravarti—*The Vratyas* —*AIOC—III* (Madras)
- (7) B K Sarkar— *Sociological approach to Vedic Culture* —*PB* (1935—September—November)
- (8) A P Karmarkar—(i) *The Vratyas in Ancient India* — *JBU* (July 1942) (ii) *The Religion of India—Vol I*
- (9) Mm H P Śastri—*The Vratyas in Ancient India*
- (10) Sampurnananda—*Vratyakāṇḍam* Other studies, in this connection, will be referred to when we shall discuss the the different theories about the *Vrātyas*

Besides these secondary works, there are references to the *Vrātya* in the *VS* (XXX, 8), *TB* (III, 4, 5, 1), *TMB* or *PB* (XVII 1-4, XXIV 18), *LSS* (VIII 6), *BSS* (XVIII 25, KSS XXII 4 1-28), *ASS* (XXII 5 4-14), *SSS* (XIV. 69-72), *Praśnopanisad* (2 11), *Amarakosa* (II 7 54), *Abhūdhanachintamani* (verse 854-ff) *MBH* (VIII, 37, 12 ff, 2026ff), *Bṛhatśamhitā* (87, 39), *Manu* (X 21) and other texts While these texts are explicit on the question of the *Vratyas*, the hymns of the *Atharvaveda* are yet unexplained The texts of the *AV*, when read with these sources, are helpful in determining the real character of the *Vrātya* in ancient India. The *Vrātya* was not a mystic figure but represented a type of people These people had their own culture and their habits were different from those of the Aryans

The high tributes, paid to the *Vrātyas* in the *AV*, support my point of view. Frequent mention of their dress, living habits, agricultural weapons and other details are indicative of the fact that the *Vratyas* were a people who upheld certain beliefs in their land of birth and tried to maintain them as far as possible. Dr Hauer calls it "non-brāhamanical religion" while Dr Karmarkar goes to the length of ascribing everything to *Vrātya* origin and further goes to suggest that they had a cult and philosophy of their own.

Besides these textual works on the subject, we have the popular belief, even today in Bihar, that southern bank of the Gaṅga is impure on account of its association with Magadha, the seat of impure culture and heretical sects. Magadha, Anga, Vanga and Kalinga were regarded as unholy places by our seers of ancient India. The popular belief is that these regions of the east were never aryanised. Hence it is imperative on us to study the problem of this land of traditional impurity and heretical sects from a scientific point of view. Magadha was associated with Ājivikaism, Jainism and Buddhism. Both in respect of politics and religion, Magadha played a distinct role in ancient India and challenged the accepted Aryan views of the west. Magadha is also associated with the *Vratya* or the *Rajanya* culture of the east. Had the *Vrātya* been a mystic figure, what was the necessity of framing rules for initiation and other rites? Why the *AV* glorified the *Vrātya*, usually associated with Magadha? Why we do not come across the *Vratya* in the *Rigveda*? Why is it that even as late as the 17th-18th century, books, prescribing rites for purification, were written on the *Vratya* problem?

A close study of all the texts reveals to us that the *Vratyas* were a set of organised peoples somewhere in eastern India having definite rites and customs. They differed from the Vedic Aryans and developed their own system of thought and culture. Anthropological studies of eastern India have shown the difference of culture and a scientific study of the

Vrātya problem on anthropological lines will bring to light more facts. In the following pages, an attempt has been made to present a scientific study of the *Vrātyas* in Ancient India on the basis of all available records and datas both in literature and elsewhere

II

Sri R. R. Bhagwat was the first scholar to draw our attention towards the non aryan character and other problems relating to the *Vrātyas*. He says—"the graphic

*Different theories
regarding the
Vrātyas*

description of the Brahmana clearly establishes that the word *Vrātya* originally denoted some non aryan tribes. As these non aryan tribes had a covering for the head to keep the sun off and were clad in white garments, with black borders, and had a silver currency and painted shoes, they can not be said to have been savages. When we come down from the Brahmana to the Sūtra (Period) we find that the society of the *Vrātyas* acknowledged the three grades of the educated, the high born and the wealthy, which perhaps formed its upper classes, and which at times, with its masses, made attempts to overwhelm the followers of the Vedas. The plan of assimilation by conversion was perhaps suggested to the Aryans by the necessity of expansion. The Vedic tradition, at least as embodied in the Sūtra of Lāṭyāyana, points to the province of Bihār as being the cradle of the non aryan race¹.

Dr A. B. Keith says—"That they (*Vrātyas*) were non aryan is not probable for it is expressly said that, though unconsecrated, they spoke the tongue of the consecrated, they were thus apparently aryan.

1 JBBRAS—XIX 363ff

2 VI-II, JRAS (1913) P 155, Cf RPIU (HOS) Vol XXXI P 338

Dr. D. R. Bhandārkar holds that the Vrātyas belong to the same race as that of the Indus valley. they must have belonged to the race of the Magas of Persia.³ He identifies them with the Magadhas of Sakadvīpa who migrated to India from Central Asia.

J. Charpentier holds that the Vrātyas were the early worshippers of Śiva in India ⁴

K. Chattopādhyay believes that between 2000 and 1500 B C. . . . Aryan tribes entered India from Central Asia and became known as Vrātyas.⁵

J. W. Hauer believes that the Vrātyas were ecstasies of Kshatriya clan and forerunner of the yogis ⁶

A. P. Karmārkar has tried to prove that the Vrātya institution was a proto-Indian one with definite deity, division and procedure ⁷

N. N. Ghosh holds—"Indo-aryan literature cum culture is not the single lined metabolic evolution of a pure blooded Aryan organism. It is a synthetic product whereof the material elements were in the main of non-aryan eastern Vrātya Origin".⁸

Mm. H. P. Śāstri says—"The accepted meaning is 'fallen from the Vrata, i e, degraded on account of neglecting or transgressing against the duties of the caste.'"⁹

3. D. R. Bhandārkar—*SAIC*—P. 42, 43, 48.

4. *WZKM*—23, 161ff, 25, 256ff.

5. *CR* (May-1924) P. 287ff.

6. J. W. Hauer—*Die Anfänge der Yogapraxis* (Berlin, 1922) p. 11ff. Cf. *Der Vrātya* (Stuttgart-1927)

7. *JBU* (July 1942) P. 80ff.

8. *IALC*—P 272, Cf-*IHQ*-X (S K. Dey's article), *India and the world* III, PB XXXIX; *JBU* (1935), *ABORI* XVII, *MI* XVII.

9. *Dacca University Bulletin* No VI—"Absorption of the Vrātyas" P. 1, *MIL* P. 5.

Dr. Buddhaprakāśa says—"Analogous to Vrtra is Vrātya. Both these words have a common root, though Vrātya is derived from 'Vrata' or Vrātu meaning a horde or settlement. Vrātya, thus, means one, who belongs to a horde¹⁰ Vrātya has been identified with king Prthu Vainya of the Puranas,¹¹ Daiva Prajā worshippers who worshipped the same gods as the Vedic Aryan¹²; with Alpines of Iran or Magians of the Gangetic valley¹³, with the Turānians,¹⁴ with the heretical people who had the tradition of the Jinas and Buddhas before sixth Century B. C.¹⁵

None of these finally settles the problem of the Vratyas. Even Dr. Buddhaprakāśa, who claims to have examined anew the evidences relating to the Vrātyas, instead of settling the issue, has posed a new problem in his conclusion. He says—"...both (Vrtra and Vrātya) of which were synonymous designations of the priestly class, among the non-aryan peoples of India, who first checked the advance of the aryan and fought with them and later on converted them to their religious order. This class came to be known as Brāhmanas in later times¹⁶."

Sampurnānanda believes in the mythical origin of the Vrātyas¹⁷. The Vrātyas were known to the authors of the *Mahābhārata*

10. ABORI—XXX 105

11. JALC—P. 36.

12. ML—P. 5

13. IC—III P. 166, 167 (E. M. Barua's article "Alpines in eastern India")

14. R. C. Datta—A history of civilisation in Ancient India P. 203.

15. JBORS—XIV. 26 (Jayaswal's Notes on the Brāhmin Empire)

16. ABORI—XXX 107

17. Vrātyakāṇḍanī—He considers AV to be of greater importance than the Rgveda in so far as the spiritual and metaphysical matters are concerned.

and the *Purana* Mm H P Śāstri takes *vrāta* to mean "those outside the circle of his own people : i.e., outside the *RSI* circle and hostile to it *Vrāta* does not occur in the *Yajurveda*, *Vratya* does. The *Vrātyas* are fit objects to be sacrificed at the altar of the god named *Atikrusta* (Loud Noise) The derivation of the word, *Vrātya*, from *Vrata* is perfectly grammatical— '*Vrate samvetāh Vrātyāh*'" In the *Yajurveda*, *Vratya* meant "men, assembled in large numbers, making loud noise, hostile to the *Rsis*, and not belonging to their society"¹⁸ *Vratya* has been equated with the fallen persons in the *Mahābhārata*¹⁹ The *Puranas* give us a clue to the understanding of the *Vrātya* problem We are told in the *Brahmāndapurāna*²⁰ that *Vaśiṣṭha* rescued various tribes by turning them into *Vrātyas* According to Śāṅkara, the *Vrātyas* were equated with the Greeks and the barbarians (*Yavana* and *Mlecha*)²¹ Śāṅkara explained *Vratya* (*Praśna upanīśad* 2 11) as meaning 'uninitiated because of his being the first born, and there being no one else to initiate him, therefore 'pure by nature' This is a noteworthy characterisation, for later a *Vratya* is either a despised non-Brahminical low caste man, or else a man who has lost caste through the non observance of proper ceremonies The *Vratya* has been glorified in the *AV* (*AV*)

18 *Dacca University Bulletin* (*Vrātya* P 2) *ML* Pp 3-4

19 *MIBH* (*Karna-parva* 37 44-46) In Verse 32, they are styled as—

एव शौर्यु गात्रेषु बालहीकेषु दुरात्मसु Cf *Drona-parva*—143 17
where *Andhaka* *Viśāṁsa* have been designated as *Vrātyas*

20 *Brahmāndapurāna*—(*Madhyabhāga*) 63 138 II In connection with the events of the conquest of *Sagara* we learn that the various tribes of the Śakas, *Pahalavas* *Yavanas* *Kambojas*, *Paradas* *Māhīkas* *Daravas* *Cholas* *Khasas* and others went to *Vaśiṣṭha* for rescue

21 S Radhakrishnan— *Religion and Society* (*I amla Lectures*)
P 116

The various theories, discussed above, are not only conflicting but contradictory as well. It is not possible to accept all of them *in toto*. The above mentioned theories are not free from doubt though only a few of them deserve consideration. We have no epigraphic or numismatic evidences to support any point of view so far as the present question is concerned. For a study of this particular problem we have to depend solely on the literary evidence. The chances of being caught in the net of hazy confusion are not only few and far between but many. It is not enough to discuss whether the Vratyas were aryaans or non aryaans but we will have to go into the details of their social organisation, custom, religion and philosophy. That will go a long way off in solving a number of allied problems of our ancient culture specially of Magadha, which was once the cradle of all heretical sects. The Vratya problem represented a wide cultural movement which held the field for a considerably long period.



CHAPTER II

ORIGIN AND LOCATION OF THE VRĀTYAS

I

The first and foremost reference with regard to the Vrātyas is found in the *AV-XV*. A Vrātya is described there as a wandering Vedic priest, roaming in the different non-aryan provinces and converting the people of those places to the Brāhmanic fold¹. Vrātya has been defined as "belonging to a roving band (*Vrata*), vagrant, member of a fellowship that stood without the Brāhmanical pale."² From the different sources, we learn that the eastern tribes of Magadha, Aṅga, Vāṅga, Puṇḍra etc., played an important part in ancient Indian history. The man of Magadha has been connected with the nomadic Vrātya.³ We do not how Dr. Triveda⁴ finds mention of the word 'Vrātya' in the *Rigveda* (I. 163-8 and IX. 14-2). Vrātya has been interpreted by some as equivalent to troops (*AV* II. 9.2) Among the list of victims of human sacrifice in the *Saṁhitās* of *Yajurveda*, Vrātya is also included (*VS*.

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1. *AV-XV*. 1.; Cf-*PIHC* X. 122. reference given here seems to be wrong as there is no such chapter XV. 1.12. XV. 1 ends in 8.
 2. *Bothlingk and Roth*, Quoted in *HOS* VIII. 769. There is a different version altogether in the *St. Petersburg Lexicon* VI. 1503; *MBH* classes the Vrātya with the offsprings of society such as incendiaries, prisoners pimps, adulterers, abortionists, drunkards and so on (V. 35.46).
 3. *LSS* VIII. 6.28—सर्वेव्रात्यापूर्वोक्तानि व्रात्यधनाभिदधुः। *KSS-XXII*. 4.24. मागधदेशीयाय महारन्ध्रवेदक्षिणाकाले व्रात्यधनानिदधुः। व्रात्यामगधदेशनिवासी, Cf *Der Vrātya*, PP. 6, 7, 96-97 143.
 4. *JBRs-XXXVI*. Pts III & IV. P. 135ff.

XXX 8 TB III, 4, 5, 1¹ In the marāṭhī language, Vratya means naughty, unmanageable and playing pranks⁵ Sayana interprets the word 'Vratya' as "fallen" Āpastamba derives it from the root '*Vrata*' (a vow) and a Vrātya is described as a Śrotriya⁶ According to Baudhayana, Vratya is a son of an uninitiated man⁷ According to the *Viṣṇudharmapurana*,⁸ Vrātya means "One who has let go the proper time for the sacrament of initiationship"

The Vrātya seems to have been a kind of ascetic different from *munis*⁹ The Vratya figured between Brahmachārīn and Skāmbha and was under the Saivite influence The Vratya (*Vrātina*?) seems to be a kind of Brahmachārīn, or at any rate one who has entered the Brāhmnical community after having been converted from an aryan, but non brāhmnical tribe¹⁰ Those, who believe in the idealisation and mystification of the *Vratyakāṇḍa* of the *AV* (XV), hold Vrātya as a type of Supreme power in the Universe¹¹ The term 'Vrātya',

5 SAIC—49 Cf the Paippalāpāda recension of the *AV* (XV 1) where Vrātya has been described as one of the many forms in which is a Brāhmaṇa celebrated

6 ADS—II 37, 13-17, SBE II PP 118-19

7 BDS—I 8

8 III 233 72, Cf Manu II 30, X 39 Cf Bloomfield—*Atharvaveda and Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, P 95 n—'Vrātya is derived from compounds like *Anyatra* and *Apacra* etc "having different customs"

9 P. T. S. Aiyangar—'Life in the age of the Manus'—P 78

10 Bloomfield—*Atharvaveda and Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* P 94

11 A Chakravarti—*Jain Gazette* (1925)—Cf B4 PP 16-17 लीङि मास्य षे षद्वेदन तथा उसकं वचित्र आधान में प्रयाग कर्म महात्मन ई स्वमा षे अनुष्ठान की दृष्टि ना था, जिसका मास्य कल्याण से निकल स व थ है, इसी समुद्र पर हुए —

Cf Anandagiri—मत्सरद्वय इति । मत्स्यार द्वीनो मास्य इति स्मृत्येति अर्थः । भवेन त्वम् पुदत्वं विवक्षितमि दाह ।

first denoting respect and spiritual purity, was applied to religious protestants among the aryaṇs who were opposed to ritualism of Indra cult and afterwards was extended to the lower orders among the new faiths.

According to Monier-Williams the word 'Vrātya' means—a man of mendicant or vagrant class, a tramp, outcaste, low or vile person, either a man who had lost caste through the non-observance of ten principal Sanskāras, or a man of particular low caste descended from a śūdra and a kshatriya and according to some the illegitimate son of a kshatriya who knows the habits and intentions of soldiers¹². We have two significant words in the vedas, viz, "Vrātūni" (R. V. III. 26.6 and V 53.11) and "Vrātyabhyām" (AV 19. 23. 25)¹³ which may help us in bringing to light the meaning and significance of the

Hauer says—"Auch in der Cūlika up. taucht der Vrātya als Urprinzip auf, und zwar neben höchst ehrwürdigen, die uns in der Höhe der mystischen Spekulation begenen, wie brahman, skambha, rohita, prāna, puruṣa and solchen, die dem rituellen Bereich entstammen wie der Brahmacārin (Der Vrātya P. 311).

12. *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*—P. 1043. He explains the term as follows—

- (a) Vrātyagana—the Vagrant class
- (b) Vrātyachārya—the life and practice of a Vagrant
- (c) Vrātyātina—the condition of a Vrātya
- (d) Vrātyadhana—the property of a Vrātya
- (e) Vrātyayajaka—One who sacrifices for a Vrātya.

Cf—*Baṅgiya Śabdakośa*—(by H. C. Bandhopādhyay) p. 2237

(i) Vyasa—1.20 वेदव्रतच्युतो ब्राह्मणः

(ii) Śuklayajurveda XXX. 8 सवित्रिपतितः.

(iii) Tāṇḍavalkya—1.38, Vṛata 27.27

13. *Bloomfield Vedic Concordance*—Vrāta has been explained as सवात्मक (Rv —1.163 B), अविवक्षितगण (RV-5 5.11), समूह (Gopatha Brāhmaṇa 6.79 51) and also in *Raghuvamśa* (XII.94)

term Vrātya. Vrātas were bands of war-like moving aboriginal tribes with whom the aryan came into conflict. Aryan heroes are called *Vrātasāhah*¹⁴ Pānini defines vrāta as a saṅgha living by violence¹⁵. On the authority of Pānini, Dr. V. S. Agrawāl holds—"the vrātas seem to have been the same as Vrātyas¹⁶". Vrātas or vrātinās, according to Weber, were non-brāhmnical western tribes¹⁷. The word "*Vrāta*" of the *TMB* (xvii. 1.5) has been explained by Sāyana as *Vrātyasamudāya*. Dr. Agarwāl believes that the '*utsedha*' of the *kāśika* corresponds to '*Prasedha*' of the *LSS* (VIII. 6.7)¹⁸. According to Pātañjali, vrāta refers to saṅgha¹⁹. Bhānuji Dikshita²⁰ has also derived 'Vrātya' from 'Vrāta'.

Weber believes that the Vrātya is derived from the word "Vrāta" (troop), the chief of a band of wanderers of aryan extraction, but absolutely independent, free from the fetters of Brāhmnical hierarchy and not following the aryan way of life²¹. Regarding the identification of the vrātyas and their institution, Dr. A. P. Karmārkar says—" (the institution), being, the earliest organisation of the proto-Indians, pervading through the whole of India ... to nullify the effects of which the aryan started a parallel institution of the *Chāturvarṇya*." ²²

14. *RV*—VI. 75.9, X. 34.12—रो व सेनानीमहंतो गणस्य राजा वानस्य प्रथमो बभूव

15. *Kāśika*—V. 3.113—उत्सेध जीविनः सघा व्राता

16. *India as known to Pānini*—p. 440.

17. *History of Indian Literature*. P. 78, cf *VI*. II. 344.

18. व्रात्यापसेधमानायान्ति—*Comm*—लोकमासेधन्त. प्रशयन्तः

19. 6.2.21—व्रातेन जीवति "किं व्रातनाम ? नाना जातीया अनियतवृत्तय उत्सेधजीविनः सघा व्राताः तेषाम् कर्म व्रातम् । व्रातकर्मणा जीवतीति व्रातीनः

20. *Sudhānta on Amarakṣa* 5.3.103

21. Weber—*Indische Studien*—I. 35, 51, 121-40.

22. A. P. Karmārkar—*The Religions of India* Vol. I—P. 19.

Cf. Sampurnānanda—op cit. p. 10—Explaining *AV* XV. 1.1.8, he says—"व्रात का अर्थ है समूह । उसके पति को व्रात्य कहते हैं । जीवों

From the above conflicting interpretations it is evident that the actual identity of the Vrātya has not yet been possible. The conflicting evidences in literature do not enable us to arrive at any definite conclusion. *Vrata* and *Vratya* are the two words from which the vrātya is said to be derived and the difficulties, involving the derivation of the vratyas, arise there. The following study will show that the Vratyas were a people associated with a particular place, having their own cultural standard. Since the very problem of aryan question is not open and above board, we can not, at this stage, hint at the possibility of identifying Vratyas with either the aryan or the non aryan.

The *Mahābharata* (*Anuśāsana Parva*) equates the Vratyas with the chandalas (line 2621) A faithful fulfiller of vows (*Vrata*) is called a Vratya²³ The exact meaning of the expression "*Vratyam pravāsanti*" has not yet been clear though Calland²⁴ has tried to explain it in the following manner— "*Vratyam pravāsanti*" is elliptic for "*Vratyām Vasatīma pravāsati*" or "leading the life of a joined group from Vrata" Is not the present explanation a presumption to suit his own interpretation of the text? Griffith calls Vratya a heretical nomad a human wanderer in search of food and lodging, a religious mendicant, regarded as a being of peculiar sanctity²⁵. Zimmer is of opinion that the Vratyas were classless peoples outside the

की समष्टि ज्ञात है, उसका पति परमात्मा है — इन्द्रियादि के सघात का नाम ज्ञात है। उसका अधिष्ठाता प्रत्यगात्मा (जीवात्मा) है।—For details P 10 ff He accepts the derivation of Vrātya from Vrāta It is evident from his above interpretation that he has mystified and philosophised the simple meaning AV-XV—is itself mysterious and writers on the subject have made it all the more so

23 SBE—II 118 19

24 PB—P 455 note

25 *The Hymns of Atharvaveda*—P, 199 also Preface

social polity²⁶ He calls them aryan but living outside the Brahmanical polity A critical study of the *Mahābhārata* reveals to us that no definite conclusion can be arrived at, in the present state of our knowledge, without taking into consideration the history of the areas in which they were located "

II

The localities, in which the Vratyas lived, can not be stated with certainty, but their roving habits suggest that they were possibly western tribes beyond Saraswati²⁸

Origin and Location It is likely that they may have been in the of the *Vrātyas* east as is supported by the *Sūtras*²⁹ Whitney regards the Vratya as a mystic figure³⁰ With regard to the mystification of the Vratyas in the *AV* (XV), Roth³¹ is of opinion that here it is not a case of the Vratya of the *PB* at all, but of a glorification of the Vratya as the type of the pious vagrant or *Parivrajaka* Macdonell and Keith do not subscribe to this view³² Bloomfield holds that the *AV* exalts the converted Vratya³³ The Magadhas³⁴ have been described as a people

26 *Alt-Indisches-Leben* P 216

27 S Sorensen—'Index to the names in the *Mahābhārata*'—p 732, For reference to *Vrātyas* in *MBH*, Cf V 1229, VII 5965, VIII. 2038, 2045, 2057, 2069, 2090, XII 10869, XIII 2621

Cf *Der Vrātya*—pp 233 40 The *Mahābhārata* refers to a number of races and peoples following primitive customs

Cf Hauer—*Yogapraxis*—176 ff

28 If we accept the derivation of the *Vrātya* from *Vrāta*

29 In the *Sūtras*, we find that the *Brāhmanas* receiving the gift of *Vrātyas* outfit, are inhabitants of Magadha

30 Cf—*HOS*—VIII

31 Cf—*St Petersburg Dictionary*

32 *VI*—II 344.

33 *Atharvaveda & Gopatha Brāhmana*

34 *BDS*—I 2, 13 *BSS*—XX 13, *ASS*—XXII 6 18, *HSS*—XVIII 6, *ZDMG*—56 553 *AA* II 1 1, Keith *AA*—200, *SA* 46, note 4

in the *Sūtras* The Magadhan wandering bands were apt to visit western lands. The *KA*³⁵ mentions *Madhyama Prātibodhi putra* as *Magadhaṭsina*. In the *AV*, Magadha is said to be connected with the *Vrātya*³⁶

Both the *KSS* and the *LSS* regard Magadha as the chief and recognised centre of the *Vrātyas* and their culture. The aryaans held Magadha in low esteem. Magadha was at a greater distance from the centre of aryan culture in the west. Weber thinks that it was so because of the persistence of more aboriginal blood here. That was possibly one of the strongest reasons for the dislike of Magadha by the early vedic people. Pargiter propounded the view that in Magadha, the aryaans met and mingled with a body of invaders from the east by sea³⁷. According to Baudhāyana, the Magadhas were of mixed origin³⁸. Dr H C Raichoudhary takes the Lichchavis and the Mallas as *Vrātyas* along with the Andhaka-Vrsnis, who are classed as such by the *Mahābhārata*, and observes " that they represented an earlier swarms of aryaans who were pushed southwards and eastwards by the Puru-Bharatas, the progenitors of the Kuru pañchāla. The *Satapatha Brahmana* actually refers to the defeat by Bharata of the Satavatās, the progenitors of Vrsni-Andhakas. The great epic refers to the exodus of the Yādavas from Mathurā owing to the pressure from the Paurava line of Magadha and probably also from the Kurus³⁹."

The *Rigveda* actually refers to the peoples called *Kurus*, *Panchalas*, *Surasenas*, *Kosalas* and *Magadhas* though under different names, viz, *Bharatas*, *Krivis*, (also *Sriṅjayas* who constituted one section of the *Pañchala* people, the other four

35. *KA*—VII 13 This is not mentioned in earlier *Aitareya Aranyaka*. Oldenberg regards this as unusual—Cf *Buddha P.* 400, note, Cf Weber—*Indian Literature*—P 112, note

36. *AV*—XV

37. *JASB*—(1897)—P 111, *JRAS* (1908)—53

38. *BDS*—I 1 29

39. *PHAI*⁵—142,

2 V.

being named *Mudgala Brihadishu Yajñnāra* and *Arbūlāśva* in the *Brahmapurāṇa*-XIII 94-95), *Yadus*, Aryans on the banks of *Saryu* and *Kikatas* respectively. Regarding the *Kikatas* the only available evidence is that of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (1.3.24 with Śrīdhara's Commentary) the *Bṛhaddharmapurāṇa* (XXVI.20) and the *Abrūdhānchīrāmāṇi*. These authorities identify *Kikatas* with the people of Magadha^{39(a)}. The *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* associates Magadha with the *Vrātya* culture⁴⁰. The *AV* certainly knows the *Angas* and *Magadhas* but never refer to the *Gangā*, the *Sona* and *Champa*. That does not detract us from our point of view as we know that *Huentsang* does not refer to *Yamuna* in connection with *Mathurā*. The *Dvijās* of *Arbuda* became *Vrātya* after *Purañjaya's*⁴¹ days. The *Arbuda* is a tribe of the south. The *Dvijās* of the country of *Ābhīras* became *Vratya* after *Purañjaya's* days⁴². Even *Kāśmīramandala* became the possession of the *Vrātyas*⁴³.

There can be little doubt that the *Purāṇa* literature represented the synthesis of at least three distinguishable forms of culture, viz.,

39 (a) *Rāhul Sāṅkrīyāna* in his recent articles in the *Āyakaṭa* has called into question the identification of *Kikatas* with the people of Magadha. He has tried to locate them somewhere near the Punjab.

40 *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (4.24.18) P. 585—मागधायां विश्वरूपि सङ्कोचान् रर्गनं वरिष्यति । सौराष्ट्रावन्ति शुद्रानर्तुं मरुभूमिं विषयांश्च ब्राह्म्या द्विजाभोरशुद्राया भोक्षयति । सिंधुतटदावीकोवीचद्रभागा वादभीर विषयान् मात्योन्मेच्छादय शुद्रा भोक्षयति ।

Cf. the Gita press edition of the same work 4.24.68-69. The *Purāṇas* can be taken as an important source for the study of the *Vrātya* problem.

41 *Bhāgavata*—XII.1.38, *Brahmaṇḍa* II.16.62, IV.44.94, Cf. *Dakṣiṇār—PI*, I.111.

42 *Bhāgavata* II.4.18. In all these texts, the *Vrātya* has been described as 'Parasta'—Cf. *PI* 1.164.

43 *Bhāg* XII.1.39 *Viṣṇu P* IX.24.69.

- (a) Vedic culture,
- (b) an older eastern advanced Vrātya culture
- (c) Older aboriginal culture in which phallism and mother worship were the most prominent ⁴⁴

The Vrātya culture flourished on the river basins of the Gangā and the Yamunā. Mr. N. N. Ghosh considers the eastern Vrātyas as foreign immigrants, whose former homeland is not exactly known ⁴⁵. He finds a close similarity between the aryaans and the *Magi* ⁴⁶. The *Prithvi Sūkta* of the *AV* and the *Purānas* appear to present a non-vedic aryan east Gangetic version of *Yima* ⁴⁷ legend which the Vrātya Rājanya might very well have taken there with them from its home in Media. The anthropologists find this legend of Prthvi goddess as lurking behind the local Śakti cult and behind the more spiritualised *Prakṛti* concept of the *Sāṅkhya*. The anthropologists have not yet been able to solve much of the problems of human development in different periods of our

44 N N Ghosh — "*The Aryan trail in Iran and India*" (Cal, 1937)
Preface—P. V.

45 *Ibid*—217 Also—Cf *Kausambi Excavation Report* (G R. Sharma)

46 *Ibid*—219 Both the *Magians* and the *Aryans* are concerned with—
(i) things of the mind
(ii) theosophy laying stress on esotericism
(iii) austere modes of living
(iv) ritualistic uncleanness
(v) extravagant faith in spells and mantras
(vi) cow-dung in India and *GOMEJ* amongst the *Magians*.

47 *Ibid*—221. Vedic *Aryan Yama* is said to have been a variant of Avestan *Yima*. For the points of resemblance between the Zoroastrian proto-magian culture and the Vrātya culture of the eastern Gangetic valley, see *Calcutta Review* of 1934. The confusing details in different sources make the comparison somewhat confounded.

history. Anthropological study of the Vrātya problem is yet a desideratum. The *Magians* possibly preceded the aryaans in Magadha and evolved as the Vratyas whose culture is found reflected in the *AV* and the *Purānas*⁴⁸. Magadha was the centre of the Vrātya culture and it actually attained the imperial status in overshadowing proportions. Magadhan Vrātyas developed a synthetic culture which seems to have been superior to Vedic culture in many respects.

Here we are confronted with the two conflicting viewpoints of Pargiter and Ghose. The assumptions, that the Vrātyas came from outside, may be discussed in the light of anthropological findings. Even the aryaans themselves were not free from mixtures. They passed through Syria and Mesopotamia absorbing a good deal of Semitic blood before they reached India⁴⁹. Anthropologists believe that the aryaans, after reaching Iran, pursued two diverging paths, one towards the west and the other towards the east. The branch that went towards the east proceeded into India, being obliged to pass across the regions already inhabited by tribes related to the Mediterranean and, perhaps, also by tribes akin to the Dravidians, appears anthropologically to have been very brown *delicocephals*⁵⁰. The delicocephalism is found mostly in true aryaans of the Vedic group and can be easily distinguished from the groups of the outer regions. Chanda has shown that among the Maithila Brahmanas of Bihar, the delicocephals prevail⁵¹. He

48 *Ibid*—208. It has been pointed out by a competent authority that 'the upper classes in Bihar, Bengal and Assam are said to differ from the bulk of the population in being broad headed rather than long headed'—Deniker in his "*Races of Man*", Cf *MI-XV* (1935) No. 1.

49 R. P. Chanda—*Indo-Aryan Races* P. 33.

50 V. G. Ruggieri—*The first outlines of Systematic Anthropology of Asia*, PP. 32-34 (Calcutta University Anthropological Paper No. 6 Translated by H. C. Chakaldar).

51 Chanda—*op cit* 43.

further holds that the Indo-aryans of the 'outer countries' (*i. e.* outside the Vedic group) originally came from an ethnic stock that was different from the stock from which the vedic aryaans originated⁵². The fact that Utkala is also included among the list of fallen countries of the east is supported by the anthropological sources. After their entry into India, when the Alpines found that the middle portion of the Gangetic plain was in possession of the vedic aryaans, they proceeded to a lower territory, descended along its eastern border as far as Orissa⁵³.

The *Dasyus* or the non-aryans of Vedic India were the true aboriginals, the fifth order of the Vedic Society or the *Niṣādas*. The *Niṣādas* and the *Vrātyas* had the right to perform sacrifices⁵⁴. Ethnically and culturally, the *Dāsas* stand differentiated as they are noseless, misfeatured and black. Culturally the *Dāsas* are riteless (*akarmān*), indifferent to god, not sacrificing (*ajayvan*), lawless (*avrata*), following strange customs (*anyavrata*), of unintelligible speech⁵⁵ and phallus-worshippers. *Panis*, *Dāsas* and *Dasyus* are described as *Mṛdhaṇācaḥ* (of hostile speech) in the *RV*. This indicates the existence of a form of speech current among the prearyans. *Panis* are described as *Grathinas* (*RV*, VII, 6.3). Macdonell and Keith

52. *Ibid*—Cf A. C. Haddon—"The Races of Man"—PP. 60-61.

"It seems that these brachycephals are the result of an unrecorded migration of some members of the Alpine race from the highlands of south west Asia in pre-historic times"

53. Chanda—*op. Cit.*—48; Cf. P. 40 there is a great similarity between Alpine brachycephals and Mongolian brachycephals (Reicher)

54. R. Shamshastri—*Evolution of Indian Polity*—P.151.

55. Bharatas called opposite camp persons of 'unintelligible speech.'

Cf A. P. Karmākar—*The Religion of India*—Vol I, P. 7—"The Bharata war gave a crushing blow to many of the *Vrātya* Royal families".

fail to make its meaning clear and intelligible (VI-I. 471) but Hillebrandt explains it by saying that it refers to a continuous flow of speech which is not understood (*Vedische Mythologie*. 1.89). Originally Vrātyas appear to have been groups of people who spoke the same language as orthodox aryaans, but did not follow their discipline and habits. Sāyana perceived the difficulty raised by the glorification of the Vrātya in the *AV* and he pointed out that the description did not apply to all vrātyas but only to some very powerful, universally respected and holy Vrātya, who was not in the good book of the Brāhmanas that were solely devoted to their own rites and sacrifices (KSS-XXII 4 1-28, ASS XXII. 54-14, PGS II 5) Avantī, Aṅga, Magadha, Surāṣṭra, Dakṣiṇapatha, Upavrh, Sindhu and Sauvira were the places where the people of mixed origin resided (BDS-1.1 31)^{55a}.

We have seen above that the Aryans, proceeding to India, appear anthropologically to have been brown delicocephalis, represented the Asuras. Both the aryaans and the asuras are said to have come from outside. Varuna⁵⁶, who knows the way of ship on the sea, has been described as asura and same is the case with Indra. That, the consciousness of having sprung from the different races was still there, is borne out by the Vrātyastoma in the *PB*. It is apparent that they were not Brāhmnical in cul-

55a For details—

ASV. G. S. 1.19, 5-7; *BGS.* III 13. 5-6. *ADS* 1.1.1 22; *Vasistha* XI. 71-75; *Manu* II. 38-39, *Tājñyalkya*-1.38.

56. A Banerji-Śāstri—*Asura India*-P. 14, Cf—*Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume of the Indian Historical Research Institute* (Indica 1953) P. 207—Where D. D. Kosambi says—"Indra too is an intruder upon the Indian scene", for Indra Vrtra legend, see L. Renou—*Vrtras: Vrthragana*. In the eastern valleys the political condition showed a reversion to the imperial conditions which had made Varuna into an Asura and a Samrāta. Cf Ghose *op. cit.* 56.

ture⁵⁷. It seems that the *Dāsas*, *Dasyus* or *Asuras*, described in the Vedic literature, included amongst them the indigenous Vrātyas or the proto-Dravidians, the negroite and the austrie races who had immigrated into India later on. These proto-Indians spoke a language different from the aryaṇs. The word *Grathina* refers to early composition (*grath*) of the Pāṇis, probably belonging to the Vrātya tribe. The Yajurveda preserves seven *āsuri* metres, viz—*Gāvatri*, *Āsuri*, *uṣṛih'suri*, *Pāṇikā*, *āsuri* etc. (Cf. Weber—*Witte Yajurveda* I LX). The Asura comprised specific groups such as *Yakṣa*, *Gāthana*, *Pannaga* and *Rakṣa* (MBH—III 173, 1220, 1206). Asura is regarded as the offspring of *Diti* and this points to the matriarchal form of society.

The *At* represents the *asuri* in the Madhyadeśa from the east of Sarasvati to the confines of Magadha. Magadha and Anga were still alien and unsympathetic territories to be treated as hostile. The asuras had established contact with Magadha. It was in the early vedic period that the asuras lost to the aryaṇs and pushed further east into Magadha, where they are said to have come to the end of their wandering, at least for the time being⁵⁸. Asura—Vrātya—Rājanya are taken as immigrants⁵⁹. Asura stands in contrast to the Aryas on the one hand and Sūdra on the other⁶⁰. Through the Vrātya rites, the admission of these asuri easterners of Bengal, Bihar and Assam (Magadha) was possible.⁶¹ The Vrātyas were first differentiated from the rest long after the *Bhṛgu-Jāmdagnī* group was established and

57. PB—XVII, 1, 9. According to Banerjee Śāstri, they represented Asura element (P. 53-N).

58. Banerjee—Śāstri—Op Cit PP. 68-71.

59. Ghose—Op Cit 97-98 for Cf P. 36 where he identifies Vrātya with Prithu-Vaiṇya of the *Purāṇas*.

60. SB—XIII, 8, 1, 2.

61. Ibid—V, 3, 3, 2, Cf *Asura Jātis*—P. 95. The *Asuras* were the spearheads and backbone of asura people in India. With the downfall of the Nāgas, ended the asura supremacy in India.

the *Vedas* fully developed Prof Kośāmbi observes⁶² "In the Rigvedic age, the term Vrātya could not have been used to distinguish extra vedic aryaans because all aryaans then were wanderers while the development of the vedas itself reflects the rise of settlements The Vratya tribes do not need the Vedas simply because they continue to wander eastwards, into territory without a great civilisation comparable with that of the Indus valley "

Here, again, we have to bear in mind that the *Bhrgus* were the foremost among the *Atharvans* In the *Rigveda*, they were the priests of the *Druhyus*⁶³ who were related to *Asura Purus*⁶⁴ and fought *Ārya Trtsu Bharatas*⁶⁵ The *Bhrgus* appear as historical people in the *Rigveda* and are associated with the *Druhyus* who were killed in the battle against Sudāsa In the *Vedas*, a Brāhmanā was made not born He, who knew *Sarbaudyā*, was called Brahmana *Bhrgus* were admitted as Brāhmanas and thereby the racial *cum* cultural amalgamation was perfected The *Bhrgus* had no animal *totem* to explain their ancestor⁶⁶ In the *Mahabhārata*, the *Bhrgu Angrāsa* assimilation is perfect The *AV* is ascribed to *Bhrgu Angirasa*,

The centre of civilisation lay in the east The migratory movements eastward continued between 1151 and 326 B C, and the seceders from the main section generally came to the east We have no evidence, at all, to show that the *Sukla āryas* ever even entered the country lying immediately east of the Indus Within the period, suggested above, the aryaans spread over a vast area of transformed culture, stretching from *Usinara*

62 *JBBRAS*—XXVI (1950) P 42

63 *RV*. VIII 3 9, 6, 18, 102, 4

64 *SB* VII 8 4

65 *RV* VI. 48 8, VII 18

66 Considerable number of *gotra* names are animal *totems*—e g *Kaśika* = owl, *Kāśyapa* = Tortoise, *Bhṛadvāja* = Skylark, *Goṭama* = best bull.

(trenching on the Vālīkas) in the north west to *Videha* in the east Madhyadeśa (between 800 and 500 B. C.) remained the centre of orthodox culture and beyond that extended a vast-outer circle of all the Vrātyas. When the migration began, the *Trtsus* (Sudāśā's original subjects) were the first to depart, for by then, the *Dasyus* had successfully undermined their position. The entire host of 'five races' (*Purus*, *Yadus*, *Turvasas*, *Anus*, *Druhyus*) followed by the *Dasyu-Kṛivis* at the head of a powerful Bharat coalition settled down at various centres in the *Doab* and the Gangetic valley and thereupon the drama of subsequent history was enacted⁶⁷. The *Dasyus* erected themselves into a cult which was transformed into an exclusive and highly privileged state hierarchy, the members of which called themselves Brāhmanas⁶⁸. From all these, it appears that there had been immigrations in Magadha from various sources much before the advent of the aryaans. Homeless state was common in the east⁶⁹. The orthodox school refers to the barbarism in speech which was to be avoided⁷⁰. The barbaric speech was probably characteristic of the Vrātyas who are described⁷¹ as speaking the language of the initiated though they do so with difficulty. It appears that the *Prakritic* form of speech developed out of the Vrātya culture,

III

We have seen above that eastern India was the centre of

67 JDL—IV. H. Bruce Hannah's article "*Indo-aryan ethnic origin*".

68 *Ibid*—VIII. 271.

69 J. N. Samaddar—"*Glories of Magadha*" P. 13

70 SB—III 2, 1, 23 24

71 PB—\VII 19 "They differed from *Trtsu-Bharatas* in not being Brāhmanical in culture and in differing in speech (*adurukta*)". The authors of the *VI* treat them as non-Brāhmanical aryaans but that seems to be confusing.

all heretical cults and the centre of Vrātya Culture. In the *Mahābharata*, the eastern tribes of Anga, Magadha—the Centre Vanga, Magadha, and Pundra play an important part. The *Sūtas* and the *Magadhas* belong to the east. The man of Magadha stands definitely connected with the nomadic Vrātyas, having weird dress, appearance and speech, rites and ceremonies⁷². The earliest mention of Magadha is found in the *AV* (V. 22-14) wherein it is indicated that Magadha was inhabited by the people of low reputation. Later Vedic texts disclose a clear antipathy to the people of Magadha. *Kikatas* were a non-aryan tribe living in Magadha in the R̥gvedic period⁷³. Whether Magadha existed during the R̥gvedic period or not, we are not definite but it is believed that the Magadhan kingdom must have existed round the middle of the third millennium B. C. as a powerful Dravidian *Makdam* (powerful Kingdom). Sumerian documents mention Magan. Heras holds that king Magan was *Mannu-dannu* and he identifies this king with Pramaganda of *Kikatas*⁷⁴. The theory of the origin of the Magadhas from the Magas of Persia is held by many. The *Bhavisyapurāna* mentions that Magas were introduced into

72 *CHI*-I 123, *LSS*-VIII. 6.28, *KSS*-XXII. 4 22, the meaning of the expression—*रामनी दे दे* is not yet clear. Cf. J. W. Hauer—*Der Vrātya* PP. 6, 7, 96, 97, 143.

73 *RV*-III. 53 14, for *Kikata*, also consult and compare from *Padmap* 20 43, 11.66 (*Sṛstikhanda*, identified with *Gayā*), *Garudap* 56 3, 81 1, 8 25, *Nārdaya*-47.14 *Devībhāgwa* 13 20 (*Kikata* is unholy), 11.6 22 (*Vindhyaparvata* is in *Kikata*); *Kalkip* 3 14 27 (*Kikata* is a country), *Skandap* 98 68, *Bhāg* 11.21 B *Āsavadashastam* 12 88, *Medinskosa* 37, *MBH* (Karnap) V. 19, *Abhedhānasetintāman*-960. Rāhul Sāṅkrtyāyana's views have been given above.

74 H. Heras—"The Kingdom of Magan" (B. C. Law Commemoration Volume)

India by Śāmba, son of Kṛṣṇa⁷⁵. The R̥gvedic ar̥yans hated the Magadhanas and placed a ban on the country because they could not bring them to their mode of living. The sage, Sutaṇṭara, had in mind these Vrātyas, when he said that those who had given up the worship of *Agni* were unhappy⁷⁶. Dr. S C Sarkar⁷⁷ takes Vrātyas to be the easterners and "non-Aīlas" (non ar̥yans) and, following Winternitz, he says—"Vratyas were neither wandering Sādhus, nor Śaiva mendicants, but certain tribes, living outside the pale of Brāhmanism". The Vrātya was synonymous with a Magadhan. The Vratya occupied Magadhā or the *Prāchya* was an area assigned by tradition to a stock different from the *Mānavas* and *Aīlas*⁷⁸.

In the Buddhist sources, we find Magadha as a country of the residence of a tribe of *Khattiya* called *Magadhā*⁷⁹. According to Buddhaghosh, there were many fanciful explanations of the word '*Magadhā*'⁸⁰. The *Magadhabhāṣā* was regarded as the speech of the *Ar̥yans*⁸¹, spread all over *Niraya*, among lower animals, *petas*, human and *Devas*⁸². The people of Anga and Magadha were in the habit of holding a great annual sacrifice to *Mahābrahmā* in which a fire was kindled with sixty cartload of firewoods. They held the view⁸³ that it would bring a thousandfold reward. It was a sacred place for the Buddhists. In this connection it may be pointed out

75 PIHC V—"Origin of Magadha" by L. B. Keny, Cf. *MAI*-41 "Vrātya and Yati" by R. P. Chanda.

76. *JBORS*—XXIV—Pt. 3 PP. 107-8

77 S C Sarkar 'Some aspects of social history'. Cf. *ML-P*, 2ff H P. Sāstrī regards the conclusion of Father Hervas as ridiculous

78 S C Sarkar—*Op Cit.* PP. 41, 46.

79 G P Malalasekhar—*Dictionary of Pāli proper names* PP. 403-4

80. *Su lampāta Comm* I, 135 ff

81. *Samantopāsādikā* (4 vols. *PTS*) I, 255

82. *Sammohana-Vinodini* (*PTS*) 387 ff.

83 *Samantopāsādikā* I 269

here that the noblest truths, aims and ways are indicated by the adjective *arya* in the Buddhist scriptures. The new religion, founded by the Buddha looked to that branch of non-orthodox tradition, which was not penetrated by the Brāhmanas, inspite of Atharvaveda's *Vrātyakāṇḍam*

From the term '*Brahmabandhu*' applied to the Magadhan Brāhmanas, who associated themselves with Vrātya ceremonies, we can see how the Vrātyas were distinguished. The great Vrātya tribe is that of the Lichchavis, mentioned with respect by the Jainas and the early Buddhists, who maintained their social position down to the Gupta period (C. 320 A D.). Manu calls the Lichchavis *Vrātya-kshatriyas*⁸⁴ They were known to the Buddhists as *Vajjis* or wanderers. Patanjali, on Pāṇini (5 2. 21), has shown that any tribal organisation outside the Brāhmanical ritual could be called Vrātya. Śarabha is called *Rṣibandhu* without the forceful contempt that goes with *Brahmabandhu*. The Vrātya *Gṛhapati* was probably the tribal chief with usual priestly functions. If we accept the derivation of Vrātya from *Vrāta* (as done by Patanjali), it would not be unfair to equate them (the Vratyas) with the *Vajjis* of eastern India. By the time of the *Vajjis*, the wandering habits had come to an end though they maintained a good deal of tribal element like the supreme power in oligarchic assembly. Since the Mallas and the Lichchavis had

84 *Manusmṛiti*—X 20, 21, 22, 23, II. 39, 40; XI. 62 B C Law is of opinion that Manu's theory about the Lichchavis is unwarranted Cf—*Tribes in Ancient India*—P. 301. S C. Vidyābhusan says "Lichchavis were of persian origin. . . some of his (Darius's) persian subjects in Nisibis (off Herat) (identified by him with *Nichvi* of Manu) immigrated to India and having found the Punjāb over-populated by the orthodox Brāhmins came down as far as Magadha which was at that time largely inhabited by the Vrātyas" *IA-XXXVII* (1907) P. 79, Cf. R. C Majumdar—*Corporate Life in ancient India*—P. 316-18 (about the *Samgha*), R. K. Choudhary—*सिद्धार्थ, History of Bihar*,

oligarchical constitution with a nomadic past, they were termed as Vratyas by Manu and accepted by others as such. The *Mahaparinnirvanasutta* is specific on the point that the Buddhist Samgha was derived from the Lichchavis. Buddha succeeded in making the surviving free tribes of his time the model for his Samgha to be illusory substitutes for what was being systematically annihilated in reality. The Samgha represented the ideal substitute for the vanished realities. The *tented nomads* (or the third caste) of Megasthenes were probably the surviving Vratya tribes comingling with the contemporary society.

The Vratyas had no Brahmanical discipline but after some time they developed their own institutions, e.g., the Śakyas and the Mallas in northern Oudh, Lichchavis and Videhas in north Bihar, Angas in the east, Kasi on the west and Barhadarathas in the centre. The early Vratyas might have formed only one class but we find that, later on, they were divided as Vratya Brahmana, Vratya Kshatriya, and Vratya Vaiśya. By the time of Manu, they seem to have been mixed up with different elements⁸⁵.

85 Manu X 20—द्विजातयः सुवर्णासु जनयाम्नास्तुयान् ।

तान्सावित्रीपरिभ्रष्टान् व्रात्यानिनि विनिर्दिशेत् ॥

X 21—व्रात्यास्तु जायते विभ्रातृपापात्मा भूजकण्टकः ।

आवन्त्य वाटधानाश्च पुष्पयः क्षीर एव च ॥

X 22—रुह्यो महश्च राजपादः व्रात्यान्निन्दिषिरेव च ।

मटश्च करणश्चैव खसौ द्रविड एव च ॥

X 23—वैश्यास्तु जायते वत्यास्तुधन्वाचार्य एव च ।

कारुषश्च विजमा च मैत्र साधत एव च ॥

II 39—अत ऊर्ध्वं त्रयोऽप्येते यथाकालम् सस्कृताः ।

साविनी पतिता व्रात्या भवन्त्यार्यं विगर्हिता ॥

Also Cf— *The Smritis and their outlooks and ideals* by T. Venkatasubramanian in the *Cultural Heritage of India*—Vol I (old Edition)

Cf—Kautilya—सवर्णास्तु च ययान् (वर्णेषाम्) अचरितव्रतेभ्योजाता

व्रात्या इति अनुलोमा also BDS 18, 16, 16

- 1 Vrātya Brāhmaṇa produces—
 - (a) Bhurjakantaka (abode not known)⁸⁶.
 - (b) Avantya (Living in the south-west).
 - (c) Vāṭadhana (Living in the north-west).
 - (d) Pushpagudha } (Abode not known) Buhler
 - (e) Śaikhha } calls them spies and sorcerers.
- 2 Vrātyakshatriya produces—
 - (a) Nata⁸⁷
 - (b) Karana⁸⁸
 - (c) Khasa⁸⁹
 - (d) Dravida⁹⁰
 Also Jhalla, Malla & the Lichchavi⁹¹.
- 3 Vrātya Vaiśya produces—
 - (a) Sudhanvāchārya
 - (b) Kārush⁹²
 - (c) Vijanmā
 - (d) Maitra
 - (e) Satvata
 We have no definite knowledge about their abode or occupation. Buhler holds that all these names denoted nations.

86. *Der Vrātya*—P 224 ff, Cf *SBE*—XXV. 406

Cf *Yāgyavalkya Smṛti*—*Vaiśya Smṛti*—ब्राह्मणप्रवृत्तेश्च शत्रुकोशमन्त्रादिवेदिनः
(Cf *Kautilya*, Bk 1, 11.12, XII. 2.)

87 and 88 *Der Vrātya* P 225.

“Die Nata und Karana, die Tänzer und Gehilfen, treiben nach Govindarāja, der sich auf Usanas beruft, als Gewerbe spionage (चारवृत्तिरिति). Wir erinnern uns hier an die liste der Ketzer, aus Maṇṭrāyāna up. VII. 8-10, wo unter den heiligen-Personen Wahrsager, Tänzer, Gemietete, im Fürstendienst Erniedrigte auftreten, ganz wie hier, wo Tänzer und Gehilfen spionierend als Vrātya umherziehen.

89-90 *Ibid*—226 gewisse Völkerreste der khasa and Dravida im Nordindien die genannten Funktionen ausgeübt zu haben . . . so wie etwa der Parde also Māgadha zur Kaste gestempelt wurde.

91. Cf. V. A. Smith—*Early History of India*⁴—33, 295 ff; *IVZKAI*—26, 358, *SBE* XXII, XI, 226, *Mahāvagga*—VI, 30, 31.

92. Kārusha is the name of a country between Kośala and Viśvā—Cf. *Rāmāyaṇa* I. 71.

Āchāryas are still the temple priests to the lower orders of Hindus in Nepāl. We learn from the *Vaijayanī* that the Lichchavis were Vrātya Kshatriyas. It was probably on account of the *Kshatrabandhavas* or the Vrātya Sisunāgas that Magadha began the imperial tradition. In the east, originally the country of the Vrātyas, *Saman* was held in great reverence and the *Sāmavedīnas* were more influential. The deities, mentioned in the *Arthashastra*, are not all vedic. It is strange that in spite of its being a despised place, Magadha was the home and settlement of Rsis like *Chyavana*, *Dadhichi* and *Vatsa*. Śāstri thinks that they most probably belonged to the converted Vrātyas⁹³. The Vātsayanas, in the *Matsyapurāṇa*, were closely allied to Kauśitaka who was undoubtedly a Vrātya.

The term "Magadhas" is decidedly a *Jana* or a tribe⁹⁴. Magadha is identified with the Vrātya⁹⁵. The Magadhas in the *AV* (V. 22. 14) denoted a tribe, not friendly to the Vedic Aryans. The Magadhas were neither Brahmanas nor Śūdras⁹⁶ and they are to be sacrificed in the *Puruṣamedha* to God *Atikruṣṭha* (Loudnoise)⁹⁷. Māgadha is said to be a friend (*Mitra*) of the Vrātya. Vrātyas and Māgadhas are thus intimately connected. Kauśitaki had a close connection with Magadha⁹⁸. According to the *PB*,⁹⁹ Kauśitaka, son of Śamaśravah, was a *Grhapati* of the Vrātya. He was an old Vrātya who lost his virility. He performed the Vrātyastoma with others, but there was some defect in the arrangement of the

93 *ML-P* 76, Cf *CHI-I*, 124—"... some at least of the Vrātyas were considered to be dwellers in Magadha."—; Cf. *Der-Vrātya* 122-23.

94 *BDS-1.2* 13, *BSS-20* 13, *ASS-22* 6.18, *HSS-17.6* *ZDMG-* 56 553

95 *AV-XV*. 2. 14.

96. *VS-XXX* 22

97. *Ibid XXX* 5. 22.

98 *KA-VII*. 13.

99 *PB-XVII*. 4. 3 and *Commentary*

stomas, and so Luśākapi, son of Kharagala cursed him by saying that Kauśitakiś will not prosper. According to Śaṅkara, Kauśitaka was the seer of one of the Sākhās of Rīgveda. Another *Gṛhapati*, known to us, is Dyutana, the worshipper of the Marutas.

Eastern India was the principal resort of the heretical Vṛātyas. Lāṭyāyana says that the *Vipathā* or the rough cart is the *prāchīnaratha* or eastern chariot. On this authority, we can assume that even the vehicle of the vṛātya was associated with the east and hence their association with Māgadha, in no way, can be rejected. Sisunāgīs are called *Aśvatra bandha* in the *Purāṇas* and it signifies¹⁰⁰ that they were Vṛātyas. Their dress conforms to one prescribed for the Vṛātyas in the *Śrautasūtras*. The Indo-aryan culture is itself a synthetic product and some of its attributes have been ascribed to the Vṛātyas of Māgadha. In some quarters it has rightly been held that the *upaniśads* and the *Purāṇas* were either produced in the Vṛātya region or have been greatly influenced by the Vṛātya sources. The synthesis was, no doubt, brought about in Māgadha. Even the *Atharvaveda* is said to have originated in the Vṛātya land of Māgadha and we find therein a reference to malarial fever. It was after a good deal of struggle that the Aṅ came to be recognised as a fourth Veda¹⁰¹.

100 See Discussion in the following pages.

101 Atharvaveda is called after particular priest—

(a) *Atharvamaṅgi*—*SB* III 17 9 1; *SB* XVI 10 10 *SB* XVI 10 10

(b) *Āṅgras*—*Kaṇva* 63 2 94 2-4 137 28 130 6
Āṅgras I 1 1 39 2 10 3 1 7 4 *Āṅgras* 10 1 2

(c) *Kaṇva*—*SB* XVI 8-14 1-4 1 4 *Upaniśad* 18 1-4
Purāṇas—11 6

(d) *Āṅgras*—*SB* 1 16 3

(e) *Atharvaveda* designates sacerdotal occupation. *Āṅgras* is the name of a family. In the *Purāṇas*, the *Āṅgras* are referred to as a group in their collective living collective life of prehistoric times (*SB*—XVI 67).

The intellectual pre-eminence of the Vrātyas is exhibited in their taste for theosophic and cosmogonic speculations, and in many respects they seem to be intellectually superior. According to the *Udyogaparva* (108, 13) Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha was born and met his death in eastern India. The *Kalpasūtras* tend to show that the Vrātyas were a respected personage withal differing from the followers of the orthodox Vedic church. The Vrātyas seem to have belonged to Magadha though they might have moved in all directions. They had unlimited scope for expansion in the east, as in the north they were bounded by the Himālayas and in the south by the Vindhya. The available materials at our disposal enable us to state that Magadha was the cradle of the Vrātya culture. They played an important part in the cultural history of eastern India as the following pages would show.



CHAPTER III

THE CULT OF THE VRĀTYAS

I

Since the Vratyas represented a definite cultural milieu of eastern India with Magadha as the centre, they also developed an independent cult of their own which *The Cult of the Vratyas* is marked by its individuality and sobriety of expression. A study of their cult is bound to throw a flood of light on the contemporary religious-cum cultural trend. Their system was no doubt unique. It is fully represented in the *Atharvaveda* and later literature. D. R. Bhandarkar has tried to prove its connection with the Indus civilisation. Indications to the existence of pre-aryan cults in the *Rgveda* are not lacking. Besides a reference to the *Śissya devah*, we get references to three more gods, viz., *Ītūdhana* (Pumana), the female (*Stri*) and *Mūradevas* with bent necks (probably *kārttikeya* of the proto-Indians?). This *triad* probably refers to the divine *triad* of the *Vratyas* or the pre-aryans. The fire sacrifice was not known to the pre-aryans. It was introduced by the aryaans. From the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* (II 5) we learn that the ancients did not perform the *Agnihotra*, a *Rgvedic* sacrifice daily performed by the Brahmanas before sunrise. Possibly the pre-aryans did not even know its name¹. The *Vrātyas* had no such cult of fire sacrifice as will be evident from their system. The *Vrātyas* had a cult decidedly different from the orthodox aryaans.

In the *AV* (XV 11)², we find the *Vrātya* as the benefactor of human society or as one who does good to a large number of people. *Sampūrṇānanda* has identified the *Vrātya* with

1. Heraas *The Origin of Indian philosophy and a sequel*

2. *AB* XV 1.1 मरत्य ऋतृतीत्यत एव स प्रकथयि तर्हिदेव

"*Parmātmā*"³. The most scientific explanation of the above *Sūkta* seems to be that the Vrātyas, as benefactors, moved and preached in all directions. The Vrātyas are associated with the *Rudra-Śiva* cult. In the intervening period between the time of the *Yajurveda* and the *Atharvaveda*, the eight *mūrtis* of Śiva assumed a complete form. In the *AV*⁴, we find eight *mūrtis* of Śiva except Bhīma. According to R. G. Bhandārkar⁵, the gods made *Bhava*, the archer, the protector of the Vrātyas or outcastes, in the intermediate space of eastern regions, Śarva of the southern region, Paśupati of the western region, Rudra of the lower region, Mahādeva of the upper region and Isāna of all the intermediate regions. The Vrātya induced the creator to look within 'himself' and he saw '*Suvarṇa*' or brilliance. That brilliance increased and grew up and it became Isāna, it became Mahādeva, it became *Ekvrātya* or the totality of Vrātya community⁶.

The *Ekvrātya* has been considered as the supreme being of the Universe. The *Ekvrātya* became Mahādeva; gained the lordship of gods and became the chief Vrātya. He roused Prajāpati to action. His belly is dark-blue and his back is red. "With dark-blue he envelopes a detested rival, with red he pierces the man who hates him, so the theologians say."⁷ The conception of Mahādeva is definitely a pre-aryan mythology. We have a reference to Śiva in the Indus valley civilisation as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe.⁸ Śiva

3. *Vrātya kūṇḍam*-P. 2

4. *AV*. XV. 6. 1-7 (Whitney's translation-*HOS-VIII*)

5. *Śaivism-Vaiṣṇavism etc.*-P.105

6. *JASB*-XVII. 22; cf *HOS-VIII*. 778-79; Griffith, op. cit 189-90.

7. *AV*. XV. 1. Cf. 27th. *Sūkta* of the 18th. khaṇḍa of the *AV* (Paippalāpāda recension); *HOS-VIII*, 773; Sampūrṇānanda-op. cit. p 6.

एकं ब्राह्मणोऽभवत् । स धनुरा(द)त्त । (त) द इन्द्र धनुरमवत् ॥६॥
नीलमस्योदरं लोहितमस्य पृष्ठम् ॥७॥

8. *Heras-Religions of the Mohenjodaro people according to inscriptions*-JBU-V-Pt.1.PP1-29.

has also been called the god of nomad Vrātya or spirit of Vrātya. R. Kimura holds that the Vrātyas or the outlandish aryan took the *mūrtis* of Śiva and engrafted them on their god in order to heighten his glory⁹. He is of opinion that since the Vrātyas fought against the Vedic aryan, they took Śiva as their leader. Śiva is said to belong to the Niṣādas and also connected with Vrātya. Śiva, though a pre-aryan god, finds indirect mention in the Vedas in the shape of Rudra. More important is the close association of Aśura with Rudra or Śiva¹⁰. It is clearly distinguishable from the rest of aryan gods. Rudra is a foremost physician¹¹. His medical virtues are connected with water. When Prajāpati committed incest with his daughter, Rudra, as *Bhātapati*, tore him to pieces. He is a higher personage than Viṣṇu. The memory of the earliest epoch survives in Śiva as one of the post-Vedic *trinity*—itself an outcome of an amalgam of contending forces¹².

9. R. Kimura—*A Historical Study of the terms of Hinayāna and Mahāyāna*—P. 32.

10. *RV.* V. 42. 11

11. *Ibid*—11. 83, 4.

12. Banerji—*Śāstri-op. cit.*, P. 15.

Der Vrātya—P. 207 ff. ; P. 306 for

Ekvrātya. Hauer says— " In dem angezogenen-Text erschient er offensichtlich als der oberste der himmlischen Vrātya, der seine einzige würde den anderen gegenüber eifersüchtig hütet... Der Ekvrātya ist folglich nicht die einfache Vergöttlichung eines obersten Vrātya ... (P. 306).

P. 308—"Und dass dieser Ekvrātya kein anderer ist als Rudra-Mahādeva, der Grossgott der nicht-orthodoxen Religiosität, beweist der feierliche Hymnus auf den ur-Vrātya AV. XV. 1."

P. 314—"Es scheint, dass in der Religion der Vrātya Kult des Ekvrātya eine ganz zentrale stelle einnahm und dass hier vor allem die Ineinsetzung von göttlicher Urmacht mit,, dem Uracher Vorgenommen worden War.

Rudra is essentially a mountain deity, wearing braided hair, whose colour is brown and red. He is clothed in skin. He is an archer, fierce, destructive like a terrible beast, a relentless destroyer. In Rudra, there have combined the forms of different but kindred gods. A reference to the cult of Rudra by the Vrātya has been seen as the explanation of a curious Vrātya - hymn of the *AV.* and of the ceremonies which are used for the introduction into the Vedic religion of non-Brāhmanical aryaans¹³. Charpentier believed that the vrātyas were adherents of Rudra-Śiva¹⁴ and they seem to have been the worshippers of Śiva¹⁵. The chief gods of the vrātyas were Rudra, Īśāna and Mahādeva, who formed the trinity and were only the various manifestations of the Ekvrātya. The conception of the Ekvrātya suggests that the vrātyas were *Ekeśvaramādins*. Hauer is of opinion that the vrātyas were definitely more prominent in their days than their aryan counterpart. He further believes that the Brāhmaṇa

13. *HOS-XXXI. 147*; The *Bṛhaddevatā* (of Śaunaka) preserves the following hymns about Rudra—

BD 1. 103—ततस्तु मध्यमस्थाना देवतास्त्वनुशंसति
रुद्रं च मरुतश्चैव स्तोत्रियेग्निमिमे पुनः ॥१०३॥

122—इन्द्राग्रस्तु पर्जन्यो रुद्रो वायुर्बृहस्पतिः

वरुणः कथं मृत्युश्च दैवश्च ब्रह्मण स्पतिः ॥१२२॥

127—विश्वानरश्च नै देवो रुद्राणां संस्तुतो गणः

मरुतोऽङ्गिरसश्चैव पितरश्च भुभिः सहः ।

X. 7—अथ हारं इति वृक्षा रुद्राणां संस्तुतो गणः

मरुतां तु गणस्येतन् नाम रुद्रा इति स्मृताः

VIII. 129 ऋभवः पर्जन्यः पर्व नागाश्च दक्षोमगो देवपत्नीर्दिशच्च

आदित्या=रुद्राः पितरोऽथ साध्या निपातिनो वैश्वदेवेषु सर्वे ।

14. For Rudra—Cf. *AV*—XI. 2.1, 3, 7, 11, 13, 14; 18 21-23; XI. 6.9; XVIII. 1.40; XIX. 10.6; 56.5; XX. 135.9; XIX. 18 3; 11.4; 9.11.

15. Śrīkaṇṭha Śāstri—*Proto-Indic Religion*, PP. 7-9; 88-90.

He believes that the Vrātyas belonged to the Vālśya class. This theory is his own figment of imagination.

record keepers have intentionally destroyed the sources of Vratya history¹⁶. The followers of the Rudra cult were generally regarded irreligious in those days and that is why the Vrātyas have been called irreligious. The Ekvrātya seems to imbibe all the chief characteristics of Rudra.

The Atharvan hymns suggest the presence of a Śiva cult among the Vratyas and certainly a cult quite different from that presented by the Vedic world. S. K. Chatterjee holds that the extravagant respect paid to the Vrātya in these poems either shows the hands of the followers of the Vrātya cult themselves or they are the works of the Vedic aryanas who felt fascinated by the Vrātyas with their non-midland practices, and perhaps by their wild mysticism, for the *AV* hymns are highly mystic in this connection¹⁷. At another place, he says: "This (the *Paurāṇika tradition*) was later on aryanised" (*Indo-Aryan and Hindi*-P. 52) Charpentier sees in them the precursor of the Śaivites of to-day¹⁸. Rudra is the protector of Vrātya in all quarters. The Rudra-Śiva had a close connection with the Vratya¹⁹ and also with the strugglers in the forest. D. R. Bhandarkar believes that the Ekvrātya later on developed into Śiva²⁰. The Ekvrātya was infused with a serenity and

16. BA—P. 13, JB—2.222, *Jaim upn.* 3.21 *Praśnopaniṣad*—II.11.
Cf Lakṣmana Śāstri Joshi—*Vaidika Sanskrit Ka Vākya*, P. 149.

मैत्रायणीय संहिता के मत में रुद्र ही पुरुषसूक्त के वर्ण्य पुरुष देवता हैं।
मैत्रायणी संहिता की इस कल्पना को शास्त्रायन ब्राह्मण से पुष्टि मिलती है। वहाँ
रुद्र की उत्पत्ति बतलाते हुये कहा गया है कि "सहस्राक्ष सहस्रपात" जैसे महान्
देवता उत्पन्न हुआ—नामकरण में भव सर्व, पशुपति, उग्रदेव, महादेव, रुद्रा,
इंदान तथा अशनि ये आठनाम माँग लिये गये। कुमार रुद्र का नवौं नाम
आया है। वृषभ तथा सर्प से रुद्र का जो सम्बन्ध है वह पुराणों में वर्णित है।
देखिए—मैत्रायणी संहिता—२. ९. २—

"महादेव सहस्राक्ष शिवमावाहयाम्यहम्"

17. —S K. Chatterjee—*Origin and Development of Bengali Language*—I, 47.
Cf R. G. Bhandarkar, *Collected works*, IV. 149

18. *JRAS* (1913), P 155

19. Bhandarkar, *Collected works*, IV. 147-76

20. *SAIC*, PP. 40-48

loftiness that is unparalleled in our religion. *Puṁścali* or harlot, associated with the Ekvrātya, was replaced by Śraddhā or faith. *Māgadha* (magi priest?) was substituted by *Mitra*. Knowledge became his garments, day and night his cap and hair, and *Mātariśvā* and *Pavamāna* were connected with him as the horses of his chariots. He became a great *Tapasvi* and practised penance for one year and as a result thereof, the Śaiva system underwent a complete metamorphosis.²¹

Vedic Rudra has few common characteristics of Śiva²². The process of assimilation probably began at the end of the R̥gvedic period. It seems that a successful attempt was made during the period of the *Śatarudriya* whose evidence is important in connection with the study of the Rudra cult²³. The *Śatarudriya* is taken to be a non-aryan document wherein an attempt has been made to aryanise Śiva. It refers to two different qualities of Rudra – fierce and benign. Rudra is also called Śiva. In the *AV*, Rudra has a higher status. *Bhava* and *Sarva* are called *Bhūtapati* (Lord of spirits) and lord of beasts respectively²⁴. Kine, horse, goat, men and sheep are marked off as belonging to *Paśupati*²⁵. To Ugra,

21. विद्युत् पुंश्चली स्नानायेत्तुर्मागधो विद्वानं वासोऽहर्ग्रीवं रात्रीकेशा हरितौ
प्रवर्तौ किल्मलिर्मणिः । मातरिश्वा च पवमानश्च विषमवाहौ वातः सारथ
रेष्मा प्रनोदः । A slightly different reading of the text has been
suggested by Buddhaprakasa in the *ABORI*, XXX. 212.
Cf. *Der Vrātyas*, P. 142.

22. Venkatarammayya, *Rudra-Siva*, PP. 27-31. He finds out similarities between Rudra & Arura

23. *VS*-chapter-*Śatarudriya* and *Tryambaka*. Cf. *Taitt. Samh.*-IV. 5.1.
Cf. Lakshmana Joshi, op. cit. P. 157-रूद्रदेव वैदिककाल में हो वैदिक
तथा अवैदिक दोनों के देवता बन चुके थे । अनायों के विविध देवता उन्हीं
के विविध रूप हैं । कपर्दी (जम्भारी) तथा व्युत्तकेश (जिसकी श्मश्रु
की गई है) असभ्य तथा सभ्य अवस्थाओं के देवताओं की ओर संकेत
करते हैं-17

24. *AV*-XI. 2.1

25. *Ibid.* XI 2. 9

the fierce, belong the four intermediate quarters, the sky, the earth and the wide atmosphere, and that which has the spirit and breathes on the earth²⁶. Bhava is addressed as Rājan.²⁷ Other names of Rudra are Sadāśiva, Isāna, Mahādeva and Paśupati etc. We have the following manifestations of the *Ekvāṇa* in the *AV* (*HOS*) - *XV. V.*

XV. V. 1—For him, they made the archer Bhava attendant (from the eastern quarter). Griffith says—"Isāna is one of the older names of Rudra" (*Op. Cit* - P. 189).

XV. V. 2—For him they made the archer Sarva attendant (from the southern quarter).

XV. V. 3—For him they made the archer Paśupati attendant (from the western quarter). (Rudra is also taken as lord of beasts. cf. *Ibid*-*XI. 69*).

XV. V. 4—For him they made the archer the formidable god attendant (from northern quarter). (*Ugram Devam* or the awful god. According to Muir, Rudra is meant here).

XV. V. 5—For him they made the archer Rudra attendant (from the fixed quarter).

XV. V. 6—For him they made the archer Mahādeva attendant (from the upward quarter).

XV. V. 7—For him they made the archer Isāna attendant (from all intermediate directions).

26. *Ibid XI. 2. 10*

27. *Ibid XI. 6. 9*—In the *Rudra-Sūkta* of the *RV*, he has been described as the father of the Maruṭas. Rudra has also been called 'Arura' (*RV-V. 42. 11*). He is also called *Siva* & *Isana* (*RV X. 92. 9*). He is also termed as '*Ugra*' and '*Dātma*'. His fierce character is evident from the following:—

AV-*XI. 2. 26*—मानो रुद्रतमना मा विषे मा नः संसादिभ्येनाग्निना । अन्वत्र रन्दिषुनं पाडयेताम् ।

SB 9. 1. 1. 1—सपेयोऽग रुद्रो देवता तस्मिन् देवा पृथग्गुणं रूपमुत्तममरुधुः स पृथोऽग दीप्यमानोऽनिष्ठदग्निमिच्छमानरुद्रनादेवा अग्निमु-
चुन्दे नोऽयं न दिव्यादिनि ।

There is a reference to a couch and headgear in connection with the Ekvrātya and D. R. Bhandātkar believes that *Uṣṇīṣa* of the Vrātya is the same as those found on the Indus seals²⁸. The *AV* refers to an 'Antaradeśa' from which the Vrātya goes to all directions. The *Ekvrātya* is everywhere. The east gave him *Bhava*, the south *Sarva*, the west *Paśupati*, the north *Ugra*, the *Dhruvā* (fixed quarter) *Rudra*, the upper *Mahādeva* and the *Antaradeśa* *Isāna*. But their principal resort was the eastern quarter as is evident from the *AV* and the *PB*. With the spread of aryanism, probably more converts from the Vrātyas were brought in and there was a merger between the two. Assuming Śiva as the Ekvrātya of the Vrātya pantheon, we may revert to the Purāṇas for more illustrations. Śiva is said to have passed through the stages of a recognised human existence²⁹. Both the *SB* and the *Satarudriya* describe Śiva as *Kirtivāsas*³⁰ (wearer of skin garment). Śiva is said to be a bearer of *Kapāla* (Kapālin of the Purāṇas). He is depicted as a yogin and an ascetic. The *Skandapurāṇa* preserves a tradition that there are eleven crores of *Gaṇa* of Śiva³¹. We have a reference to eleven Rudras. Śiva is represented with eleven armlets on the Indus seals. This number seems to have attained a sanctity of its own and with the amalgamation of the Rudra – Śiva, this sacred number of eleven was ascribed to Rudra. We learn from the *MBH* that Rudra was the son of *Tvaṣṭṛ*. Rudra had eleven names³².

28. SATC, P. 41 ff.

29. Monier Williams—*Brāhmanism and Hinduism*, P. 78. For Purāṇic reference; cf my article, 'Heretical Seats in the Purāṇas' in the *ABORI* (1957).

30. *SBE*, XII. 443. Cf. *Amarakoṣa*—"Clad in skin". The *Anurāsana Parva* and the *Purāṇas* have 1008 names of Śiva.

31. *Skandapurāṇa* (Kāśīkhaṇḍa) - Adhyāya - 53.

32. *Śatapatha* 207.20—*Ajākapada*, *Ahimbudhanya*, *Vīrṇapakṣa*, *Rudra*, *Hara*, *Bahuripa*, *Tryambaka*, *Sureśvara*, *Savitṛ*, *Jayanta*, *Pinākī*, and *Aparājita*. We have a genealogy of Śiva in the *Harivamśa* (1. 1. 41 ff.).

Besides the description of the Ekvratya, there is also a hymn on *Skambha*, which is rather an enunciation of the doctrine of the *Linga*. In this connection the mention of *Pumścali* and *Māgadha* with Ekvratya is important. In consonance with the system of polarisation prevalent among the Vratyas, the idea of destruction and fertility were brought together in the case of *Linga* also³³. Traditionally *Bānalingas* are found in different parts of the world. The *Gandakī* (a river originating in Nepal) supplies six varieties of *Linga* stones which are called *Sūanabha*, *Aghora*, *Sadyojāta*, *Vamadeva*, *Tatpuruṣa* and *Iṣāna*, of which *Aghora* alone is unfit for worship³⁴. Since *Pumścali* is included in the list of victims at the *Purusamedha*³⁵, it is held that she belonged to the pre-aryan cult. D. R. Bhandarkar identifies nude images of the Indus Valley with the *Pumścali*. We have in the *MBH* a reference to the cult of *Śakti* worship. The expression is like the *Bhagalinga*³⁷, *Māhesvariprajā*³⁸, *Matrikas*³⁹, and *Bhagadeva*⁴⁰ etc. Durga is said to have her perpetual abode in the Vindhya mountains⁴¹. The demoness is said to have been worshipped by the Vratyas. According to the *MBH*, the Vratyas were spread over a wide

33 For details, cf. - Murray *Religious Thought and Life in India*, P. 327 of the *Skandapurāṇa* (Avantīkhaṇḍa) I. 1. 32.

Cf. BA-16-17—विश्व का भ्रमण करने वाला। यदि प्रात्य वायु है जिस से हम भारतीय *Hermes* या *odin* बड़ सकते हैं। स्कम्भ के अनुष्ठान की कल्पना इसी नमूने पर हुई है।

34 Oppert, *Original Inhabitants of India* P. 382 ff.

35 VS - XXX. 8.

36 SAIG P. 42 ff.

37 *Anuśāsanaparva* 58. 3.

38 *Ibid*, 45. 217.

39 *Śalyaparva*, 47. 1 ff.

40 *Āśvamedhikaparva*, 43. 15.

41 *Virāṭaparva*, 178 ff.

area and included even the peoples of Vahlikas⁴¹ (a). If this surmise of the *MBH* be accepted, there would be no difficulty in suggesting that they were the originators of the *Śakti* worship. Hauer has shown how close are the parallels between some of the old sacrifices like those of the *Mahāvratas* and many of the ceremonies which repel us in the *Tantra*⁴².

The concept of *Linga* is closely associated with the idea of *Skambha*. The *Skambha* is "conceived as co-extensive with the universe and comprehends in him the various parts of the material universe as also the abstract qualities, *tāpas*, faith⁴³ etc." G. N. Rao suggests that the non-aryan worshippers of Phallus might have based the identity of the *Linga* with *Skambha*⁴⁴. The idea of *Skambha* can be traced to the *Rgveda*⁴⁵. *Skambha* has been clearly explained in the *Athar-*

41. (a) *Kaṇvaśāstra*, 45.6-8

तत्र वै ब्राह्मणो भूत्वा ततो भवति क्षत्रियः
वैश्यः शूद्रश्च वाहीकस्ततो भवति नापितः ॥
नापितश्च ततो भूत्वा पुनर्भवति ब्राह्मणः
दिजो भूत्वा च तत्रैव पुनर्दासोऽभिजायते ॥
भवन्त्येककुले विप्राः प्रसृष्टाः कामचारिणः
गान्धारा मद्रकाश्चैव चाहिकाश्चास्पचेतसः ॥

Śāntiparva, 65.13-14.

यवनाः किराताः गन्धाराश्चीनाः शबर यवराः शकास्तुपाराः कङ्काश्च
पल्लवाश्चान्धमद्रका पौण्ड्रा पुलिन्दा रमठा काम्योजाधैव सर्वशः
अस्त्राण्यश्त्रा अस्तूताश्च वैश्य इति च मानवाः ॥

For other details—cf. *Anuśāsana*, 38. 22-23; 35.17; *Śāntiparva* 65.18-22; 188.5. *Tijñanavalkya*, 101.66; *Manu*, VIII. 413-416; X. 47-52.

42. J. W. Hauer, *Der-Vrātya*, P. 246 ff. "Die Vrātya und das Mahāvratā" Cf. Payne, 'The Śaktas', P. 63. The *Mahāvratā* is a part of the ceremony of the *Gaṇḍamayana*.

43. G. N. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, II-PL. II-P.105-6.

44. *Ibid*, 56-57.

45. *RV*, IX 61.16; IX. 74.2; IX. 86-46.

veda⁴⁶ *Skambha* is distinct from *Prajāpati*. The thirty three gods are comprehended in him. The gods who form part of him do him homage. It is believed that *Skambha* in the beginning shed forth the gold (*hiranya*) out of which *Hiranyagarbha* arose. The story of the appearance of Śiva as a blazing pillar is to be traced to *Skambha* of the *AV*. By the time of the *Mahabhārata*, *Linga* had come to be regarded as the symbol of Rudra or Mahadeva⁴⁷. Rudra is revealed by his *Linga* (*Svalingavirbhūta*). Aśvatthāma worshipped the *Linga* of Rudra in successive ages.

The worship of the *Linga* was an esoteric development of the Rudra cult with a special significance. It is very difficult to say whether the cult of *Linga* had an independent development. In that case it might have been assimilated with Rudra cult later on. The *Brhaddevata* (III 110) preserves a tradition referring to the occurrence of the name *Lingat*⁴⁸. We can see the emergence of ascetic Rudra through the *Satarudriya* and *Vratya* hymns. The *Śvetasvatatropanīśad* (IV 11, V 2) represents the furthest point in the development of the idea of

46 *AV*, X. 7 35—

स्कम्भोऽधार चावापृथिवीभेदे स्कम्भो दाधारोर्वन्तरिक्षम् ।

स्कम्भो दाधार प्रदिशः पडुर्वीः स्वम्भ इन्विश्वंभुवनमाविवेश ।

Brahma has been identified with *Skambha*. Cf *AV*, 10 8 1 16, *Brahma Sūtra* 2 4 42; *AV*, 10 2 32, 10 7 38; *Paippalāda Samhitā*, 8 9

One of the functions of the *Skambha* is to beget *Hiranyagarbha* or *Purāṇapurusa*, the god of production.

47 *Auśāsana-parva* Chapter 17. *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu* and *Indra* worship *Linga* of *Māhesvara*.

48 *BD*-III 110

ज्ञातुं न शक्यते लिङ्गात् तथापि कश्चिदुच्यते ।

आदित्या वसवो रुद्रास् त्वमञ्ज इति सस्तुता ॥

cf J N Banerjee—'The phallic emblem in ancient and medieval India'—*JISOA* (June-1936)

Rudra ~ Śiva ⁴⁹. The *Bṛhaddharmapurāṇa* says that *Prakṛti* in the form of putrid corpse approached *Tāmasapurusa Śiva*, absorbed in meditation in the primal waters. Śiva caught hold of the corpse and seated himself on its breast realising in a moment that the *Devī* in the form of corpse became a *yoni*. After having planted the *Līṅga* in the *Tṛikoṇamaṇḍala* he dived into the water for creating *Māheśvaripriyā*. (cf. *Bṛhaddharmapurāṇa* - *Madhyamakhaṇḍa* - chapter I). We get similar description with some variations in the *MBH*. There is a different account in the *Saurapurāṇa* and that tallies with the account in the *Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa*.

The various incarnations of Śiva are mentioned in the *Vāyupurāṇa* (chap. 23), *Līṅgapurāṇa* (chap. 24); *Śivapurāṇa* (*Vāyaṁya - Saṁhita* II. chap. 10) and in the last chapter of the first part of the *Kūrmapurāṇa*. The *Līṅgapurāṇa* makes in this connection particular mention of *Pāśupata vrata* and declares its superiority to *Sāṁkhya* or the *Pañcharātra* discipline. In the description of the Mahāvratā rite of the *PB*⁵⁰ (which is later than the *JB*), we come across a barbaric rite based on animistic views, that an inhabitant of Magadha and a courtesan should copulate. This rite is ordained in the *JB*⁵¹ but it does not occur in the *PB*. *SSS*⁵² points out that the practice of this kind is obsolete. In the *PB*, we note a certain inconsistency. Where the *JB* has *Isānadeva* or *Rudra*, the *PB* has *Viśvedeva*.

49. For *Rudra*—see—*RV*—1.114. 10; II.33.9.10; II.33.2.12; 1, 114.9; 1.114.4.3; II.33.7; VI. 49.10; VII.46.2; *VS* XVI. 20.21; *AV*—II.2.22; VI.9.2; XI.22.11; IV.28.4; XI.2.30.

He is fierce and wrathful god in the *RV*, a healer and protector of cattle. There is a different picture of *Rudra* in the *AV* and the *VS*.

50. *PB* (Calland), Introduction XX.

51. *JB*, II.404.

52. *SSS*. XVII. 6. 2. ; Some prescriptions of the *JB*, II. 113 are not found in *PB*, XIX. 13 and they are the most barbaric ones.

But the *Saman*, by means of which Prajapati through this deity, seeks to retain the cattle, is in both the texts of the *mārgiyāva*, the *Saman* that elsewhere in *PB* (XIV 9 12) is brought in connection with the Rudra. The name Rudra is avoided in the *PB* (XIV 9 12). Rudra attained supremacy over both kinds of animal⁵³. The easternly region is the unconquerable one of the chanters⁵⁴. There is a reference to peasantry, food and the nobility. The nobility is raised over the peasantry⁵⁵.

The Vratyas have also been called *Daiva* praja worshippers and favourites of gods. It is said that the gods of the Vratyas went to heaven and Vratyas became dispirited. They lived in temporary sojourn. The *PB*⁵⁶ mentions one *Buddha Saunājana* as the *Sthapati* of *Daiva Vratyas*. Sayana renders *Sthapati* by *yajmana* but that is a guess based on the fact that *Buddha-Saunayana* is there described as performing a sacrifice. All *Daiva Vratyas* are described as performing the sacrifice with *Buddha* the *Sthapati*. *Sthāpati* can mean a chief or king. The *Daiva-Vratyas* are described as sacrificing to the *Devas* (gods) therefore they are not gods themselves (as understood by some scholars)⁵⁷. Calland interprets *Sthapati* as *Grhapati*. We shall discuss the details of this aspect later on.

53 *mārgiyāva Saman* are called the chants of Rudra. We have in *JB* II 254. The god addressed the mighty god—Rudra of *AB* III 34. 3 *PB* VI 2 5 mentions 8 *Vasus*, 11 *Rudras* and 12 *Ādityas*.

54 *PB*-VI 5 20.

55 *Ibid* VI 5 1 cf-*SB* XII 7 3 20—Rudra is the ruler of cattle. *Vāmadevya* is cattle cf-*PB* VII 7 16—we find gods dividing animals amongst themselves.

56 *PB* XXIV 18 refers to sūctyone day rites.

57 *PB* XVII 1 1. देवा वै स्वर्गं लोकं मायस्तेषां देवा अहीयन् ब्राह्मणां प्रमन्तस्त आगच्छन् यतो देवा स्वर्गं लोकं गायन् etc. *Sāyana* Says—देवानामनुचरा अत एव देव सम्प्र गच्छद्देवा जना । ब्राह्मणा प्रवसन्त according to *Sāyana* means ब्राह्मणम् आचारहीनता प्राप्य प्रवसन्त.

II

The details, with regard to the working of the institutions of the Vrātyas, referred to in the *AV* and other allied literature, throw some light on the Vrātya Order. It appears that the solemn vows were to be taken by everybody who belonged to the cult of the Vrātya. The *AV* (XV. 3) gives us the following information on this point :—

AV - XV. 3. 1—He stood a year erect; the gods said to him :—Vrātya, why now standest thou ?

XV. 3. 2—Let them bring together *āsandi* (seat) for me.

XV. 3. 3—For that Vrātya, they brought a seat.

XV. 5. 4—Both *Bṛhat* and *Rathantara* were two lengthwise pieces, both *yajñā*, *ajñīya* and *Vāmadevya* the two cross (pieces)

.....

In the *AV* (XI. 3. 16) the *Bṛhat* is the stirring spoon, the *Rathantara*, the ladder. Griffith (*op. cit* 187) explains it as follows—“ The *Bṛhat*, the *Rathantara*, the *Ādityas* and all the Gods followed him. That man is alienated from the *Bṛhat* who reviles the Vrātya who possesses this knowledge. He, who hath this knowledge, becomes the beloved home of the *Bṛhat*, the *Rathantara* and the *Ādityas* ” Śaunaka says— “ the *Gāyatrī*, the *Ekavīmśa* (stom), the *Rathantara* chant and the *Vairāja* chant, the *Śādhyas* and the *Āptyas* with the *Vasus* belong to the sphere of Agni⁵⁸ ”—“ In it, the finest three seers

प्रजास कुर्वन्त । K. C. Chattopadhyaya takes earlier pre-Rgvedic conquerors of India as *Daisas* and *Vrātyas*. It is to *Daisa-Vrātyas* that *Prithu* Vainya puts several questions in the *Jaiminīya Samhitopaniṣad*, cf *GR*, (May 1924), *AIOG*, III 265ff. , In the *JB* II. 222, the Vrātyas insult Vāyu & Isāna.

58. *BD*,—1.116. These three groups (*Śādhyas*, *Āptyas*. and *Vasus*) take the place of the general statement of the *Nirukta* (VII 8), but none of these three groups belongs to the terrestrial region according to *Naigantuka* (V. v. 6)

have declared their own power; how Rathantara chant and how the *Brhat* chant⁵⁹". The above hymns make it clear, that host of gods were attendants of the Vrātyas, solemn vows were his messengers and all his creatures his worshippers. The above - quoted *AV* hymns prove that the Vrātya had attained a pre-eminent position as an ascetic. The Vrātya was recognised to be treated with reverence by the people. Wherever he visited, he got due respect. There was no bar on his stay anywhere since he was to be worshipped as deity. The *AV* describes the pre-eminent position of the Vrātyas as follows⁶⁰ -

"So let the king, to whose house the Vrātya, who possesses the knowledge, comes as a guest, honour him as superior to himself. *So he doth not act against the interests of his princely rank or his kingdom*" (*Hos* - VIII 783) The king should esteem the Vrātya better.

—"Thence arose sanctity Aufrecht believes that "thence" here means 'out of the Vratya'".

गायत्री चैक विश्व यच्च साम रथतरम् ।

साध्या साम च दैराजम् आप्त्याश्च वसुभि सह ॥

- 59 *Ibid*, VIII 78—Dhātīr, Sāvīrī, Vīśnu, (mentioned in each of the three stanzas of this hymn) as the source from which others (Vasiṣṭha, Bhāradvāja) derived the Rathantara, the Brhat and the Dharma.

आत्मप्रभावमाचरन्त्युम् तात्रधा ऋषयस्तथ ।

रथतर यथा स्तोत्र स्तोत्र चैव यथा बृहत् ।

cf, *Vrātyakāṇḍam* p 14 : ते बृहण्य रथन्तर चादित्याश्च
विश्वे च देवा अनुव्यञ्चलद् ।

P 15—बृहते च वै सरथन्तराय चादित्येभ्यश्च विश्वेभ्यश्च आ वृश्ते य एव-विद्वांस
ब्राह्मणमुपवदति बृहत्तश्च वै सरथन्तरस्य चादित्याना च विश्वेषा च देवाना
प्रिय धाम भवति । तस्य प्राच्या दिशि ।

- 60 *AV* XV X, XI. Cf *Vrātyakāṇḍam*—P 43 ff. —तद् यस्यैव विद्वान्
ब्राह्मणोराशोऽतिभिर्गृह्यानागच्छेत् । श्रेयांसमेनमात्मनो मानयेत् तथा सृत्राय ना
वृश्ते तथा राष्ट्राय ना वृश्ते । also Cf P 46

—"Sanctity enter Brhaspati, . . . it was said - " 'Iti' here refers to Vratya according to Aufrecht.

—"This fire is sanctity, Yonder Ādityas is dominion"—Griffith identifies fire with Brhaspati and Āditya with Indra.

"To him comes sanctity "

The dedication of the Vrātya in more than one way is clear from the Vratya hymns. We have to bear in mind here that personalistic theory of creation is not new to the *AV* but is narrated in the Vedic, Brāhmaṇic, and other literature. That is why we find that sometimes the *Vrātyadharmā* has been compared to the *Brāhmaṇadharmā* (*JB* - II. 222). Vrātya is also called *Viśvapuruṣa* (*AV*. XV. 18) whose qualities are as follows -

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| (i) right eye | — Āditya (Sun) |
| (ii) left eye | — Moon |
| (iii) right ear | — Fire |
| (iv) left ear | — Wind |
| (v) Day and night | — Nostrils |
| (vi) Diti and Aditi | — Two skull halves |
| (vii) Hand | — year |

With day is the Vrātya westward, with the night eastward

The detailed description of the Vrātya in the *AV* is reminiscent of the great tradition associated with the popular god Mahadeva. In the early Vedic period, *Śiṣṇa-devas* and *Vāma-devas* were looked down by the orthodox aryaṇs. The position gradually changed and the development of the Rudra-cult brought in its train an amalgam of the *Rudra-Śiṣṇa*. This amalgam indicated a victory of the aboriginal popular god of the Indian people over the aryaṇs. Even the *Śivalingas* were accorded welcome and *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad* preserves a tradition about the various *lingas*⁶¹. The association of *Mahā-*

61 *Urdhvalinga, Hiranyalinga, Suvarṇalinga, Divyalinga, Bhavalinga, Śarvalinga, Jvalalinga, Āmalinga, Paramāmalinga, Śivalinga, Maṣṭru-ya* ? *Samhitā* indicates that Śiva worship began in the Vedic period

deva with the Vrātya is important. It seems that the early Vrātya institution was a common whole, revered and reared up by the original inhabitants of India. These people had a definite deity of their own. The mystic glorification of the Ekvratyā (Īśana, Mahadeva and Rudra) is nothing but extravagant praise by those who had to struggle hard against the orthodox aryan cult. Had not this been the case, what was the necessity of casting slings on the Vratya, in unusually sarcastic and ironical terms and compiling books after books as late as the nineteenth century to prove their point of view. The Vratyas, it seems, after gaining victory over their rivals, got the XVth khanda of the *AV* compiled, by some of their representatives, simply for the glorification of their Order. We learn from the *Purānas* (*Brahmānda Purana* – Madhyabhaga – 63 138 ff) that Vasiṣṭha was inimical to the Vratyas. From the language of the *AV* it is evident the *Vratyasūktas* were not collected when the *PB* was composed. *Kauṣītaki Brūhmaṇa* is also later than the *PB*. The *AV* (XV) is very near the classical Sanskrit and contains the glorification of the Vrātya.

Māgadha was the friend and adviser of the Vrātya. The *Sūta – Māgadha* tradition was maintained in recent times by the *Bhāṭas* and *Chāranas*. In connection with the purification ceremony of the Vratyas, we have a reference to them as *Yajamaṇas*⁶². *Sāman* was held in great reverence among the Vratyas⁶³. In the *AV* (XV) we find seven of the eight *mūrtis* of Śiva the eighth being added in the *Kauṣītaki* and all these eight were consolidated in the *SB*. Śiva's connection with the eight forms is closer and intimate. Śiva had no share in the Vedic

Cf *BD*—VIII. 81—प्रत्यृच देवता स्तौति लिङ्गैरेवात्रलक्षिता

आदिषु पुत्रवामस्य प्रथमा हि वदत्यथ ।

—the deities here are indicated by their characteristics (*Linga*)

62 *PB*—VI 9 24 and XVII 1, 7 *Commentary*

63 *ML*—58

sacrifice^{63A}. His admission into the Vedic pantheon produced a great commotion typified in the *Dakṣa-yajña*. The various gods of the non-aryans were nothing but the different manifestations of Śiva (*Taittiriya Saṁhitā* 4. 5. 4. 1). The commotion, created by the *Dakṣa-yajña*, was only natural because it was impossible for the hated 'Vrātya god' to be included into the Vrātya pantheon without a struggle. An indirect reference in this respect is found in the *AV*, wherein it has been stated that if the Vrātya goes as a guest to a Brāhmaṇa's house, who is engaged in sacrifice, he should at once rise and ask the Vrātya to perform the sacrifice himself. If he declines, he should seek the permission of the Vrātya to perform it himself.

It appears that the *Bhṛgu-Aṅgirasas* made a Veda of their own to expound their cult of the Ekvrātya to develop their own order. That Veda was the *AV* or the Veda of Ekvrātya. The details, in this regard, will come up for discussion in the next chapter. The *TMB* maintains a tradition how the gods outwitted the Asuras.⁶⁴ "With the Asuras was the whole sacrifice.....the God saw and took." Gods, having expelled the Asuras, ascended the world of heaven.⁶⁵ The reference to the Vrātya, going as a guest to the sacrificing Brāhmaṇa,⁶⁶ hints at the possibility that the Vrātya originally belonged to a nonsacrificing race. This evidence is nothing more than a

63(a). There is a reference to Śiva worship in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. Śiva worship in images probably developed near about the period.

64. *PB*—VIII. 6.5.

65. *Ibid*—VIII. 9.15.

66. *AV*—XV. 12.—Without the permission of the Vrātya, the Brāhmaṇas should not sacrifice. This indicates the pre-aryan characteristics of the Vrātya. The aryan introduced the fire sacrifices, which did not exist before, in India.

support in favour of the complete deification of the Vrātya and his order

There were four divisions of the Vrātya. The Vratyas swelled in number by leaps and bounds. Their nomadic habits persisted which is evident from the *TMB*. Those belonging to the Vrātya order were generally termed as 'fallen' or 'degraded'. The main divisions were —

(1) *Hina* or Libidinous—The people deteriorated themselves by staying in the Vrāti settlement. They practised neither *Brahmacharya* nor pursued agriculture or trade. They have been called *Kanisthas* among whom were the *Arhantas* and *Yaudhas*.⁶⁷

(2) *Gūrāgīras*—They were swallowers of poison and ate Brāhmana's food. They call good words bad. They used to strike the guiltless with a stick. Though not initiated, they speak the speech of the initiated.⁶⁸ Hopkins characterises

67 *PB*—XVII 52–53, cf XVII 1.2 'Those, who lead the life a joined group, are destitute, left behind. For they neither practise the study of the Veda nor do they plough or trade.'

68 *Ibid*—XVII 1.9, cf *Baudhāyana*, XVIII 24—अथयद् ब्राह्मणं वदन्ति दीक्षितवादस्य तदस्यम्। On the authority of the *PB*, D R Bhandarkar thinks that this conception seems to have given rise to notion that Sva was a swallower of poison, on account of which he is designated as *Nilakan'ha* (*SAIC*—p. 46), also cf—*Baudhāyana*—XVIII 47

cf *Der Vratya*—pp 155 ff.

p 156—"Ich habe in meiner fruheren Deutung der satze die vermutung ausgesprochen, die Vrātya sein wirkliche Giftesser gewesen. So konnte Z. P auch die stelle Taitt Ār. I, 9, 3 gedeutet werden. Hier werden beim Pau des Federal-tars angerufen, unter anderen Gottern rasmayas ca devā garagīrah .. Ferner gab es einen RSI, der den Namen garagīnin trug

them as poison eaters, thieves and taker of priests' food. In the words of K. C. Chattopadhyaya—"They felt no scruples in snatching away the wealth of the Brāhmanas and women" (CR—May 1924-p. 289)

(3) *Samancha Medhra*—They were those whose "Medhra" hung low through control of passion. They were called Jyesthas, who resided in the Vrāti settlement and in the words of A. P. Karmarkar practised Yoga.⁶⁹

(4) *Ninditā*—Consisted of people who had become outcastes

The KSS⁷⁰ enables us to explain these technical terms. The KSS⁷¹ has the following classification—

- (1) *Ninditāh* (No. 4 of the above)
- (ii) *Kanistha* and *Hinācharā* (No. 1 of the above classification).
- (iii) *Jyestha* (No. 3 of the above classification)^{71A}.

(1) *Ninditāh* are those base persons charged (by honourable men) of sins and excommunicated and they should perform the rites of the second order.⁷² The PB⁷³ says—"This

cf JB—II, 83. *Der Vrātya*—pp. 164–65

p. 164—Wir müssten dann annehmen, dass die Vrātya auf ihren Wanderungen offiziell an ketzerischen Totenopfern teilnahmen, sei vielleicht sogar vollzogen.

69. PB—XVII 41, Karmarkar—Op. Cit. 25.

70 The following texts have been used—

(a) Karkabhāṣya of the KSS (abbreviated KSS (k))

(b) Kāśī edition of the KSS.

71 KSS—XXII, 4.

71(a) ASS (k)—व्रात्याश्चतुर्विधाः.—निन्दिता, कनिष्ठा, ज्येष्ठा, क्षान्ताचाराश्च, Cf LSS—VIII, 6.

72 There is a slight change in the reading of the Kāśī edition text.

73. P. B.—XVII, 2.1. These words have not yet been fully

rite should be performed by those who are base and censured, lead a Vratya life."

(ii) *Kaṣṭha*—The youngsters should perform the rites with the third order.⁷⁴ According to the *PB*, "those, who being youngest, lead a Vratya life." The *Hināchāras* are those who have given up the *Dīja* rites⁷⁵ or have been deprived of the *Sāvitri*.

(iii) *Jyeṣṭha*—The elders are entitled to the rites of the fourth order.⁷⁶ The older persons having retired from the

explained by the writers on the subject except Dr. Hauer in his *Der Vratya*—p. 149 ff.

Der Vratya—150. Śāyana explains it—

"नृशसा निन्दिताः मनुष्यैरभिज्ञमानेन पापाभ्यारोपेणर्गहिताः सन्तो ये पुरुषाः
म्रात्याम् व्रात्यत्वम् प्राप्य प्रवसेयुः (Śāyana's Commentary on the *PB*
XVII, 2.1)

PB-XVII, 2.4—नृशसनैरभिपस्यमानं पुरुषमग्रं श्रेष्ठं परिणयन्ति ।

Der Vratya—p. 155.

—"Und da sich der" grösste Übeltäter, (Winternitzens Übersetzung Von *nriṣaṃsa tama*) als Kandidat für die Würde des *Grhapati* neben dem Hervorragendsten in der Wissenschaft, dem Vornehmsten an Geburt oder den Reichsten gar eigen ausnimmt, Werden wir hier die Bedeutung "Beschwörer" als die einzig mögliche, sicher als die dem Gesamtbilde der *Vratya* angemässeste annehmen. Denn Warum der" grösste Übeltäter" Zu jener hohen Würde neben den andern berechtigt sein soll, ist nicht ein Zusehen, Während der grösste Zauberer unter den *Vratya* folgerichtig auch ihr Vorsteher beim Opfer sein Kann.

74. *PB*-XVII, 3.4 तपसा कनिष्ठाः ।

75. *KSS*—(*Kāṣṭhī* edn.) अन्येऽपि विज्ञातिकर्म परित्यज्य हीनकर्माशीलास्तेऽपि म्रात्याः । Cf *LSS*—VIII, 6.

76. *KSS*—XXII, 4. 6-7 *Kāṣṭhī* edition has a slightly different reading ; ing ; cf—*PB*, XVII, 4, 3.

act of procreation are known as *Jyesthas*⁷⁷ Amongst the *Hinas* there were *Ārhanas* and *Yaudhas* The *Nīdanasūtra*⁷⁸ refers to two kinds of *Vrātyas*—(a) The *Sīrsādīs* and (b) the *Aisikāyavis* For the *Sīrsādīs*, he should apply or chant the *agnistoma Suman* or *satobhratī* verses This is the opinion of Dhanañjaya These were known as the older ones For the *Aisikāyavis* he should chant it on *prathabrhatī* verses. Dhanañjaya defends the manner of the *Kausitakinas*⁷⁹ All these are indicative of the fact that there were sects and divisions among the *Vratyas*, because we find that for all of them separate *Vratyastoma* rites have been prescribed D R Bhandarkar⁸⁰ is not wrong when he hints at the earliest origin of the caste system in ancient India out of which the aryaṇas, who had no such division, built their own fabric of social system

From the above study, it is apparent that almost all the sects of Śaivism were the products of the *Vrātya* order. The division of the *Vratyas*, set forth above, confirms our point of view The *Garāgīras*, *yati*, *Pāsupatas*, *Kapālikas* and others came into prominence with the spread of the *Vrātya* culture The later literary sources simply depict their darker side⁸¹ Even the later sources with regard to the *Vratyas* are coloured

77 The Kāśī edn has the following commentary on this Sūtra —
“अग्नौ प्रजननेन्द्रियसामर्थ्या यौवनापगमनेन स्वविरा वृद्धा ज्येष्ठ सञ्ज्ञा भवति
तेषां न तेनो निन्दितमादि स गृहपति कार्यः ।

78 *Nīdanasūtra*—VI 11

79 JB—II 226—“Now the *Vratyastoma* of the *Aisikāpāvas*, who had *Kusitaka* as their *Gṛhapati*, a sacrifice of which the *Pavamāna* laws are sixteen versed ”

cf PB—XXIV 18 1 (b)—“The *Vrātyas* had a sacrificial session with *Buddha* as their *Sihāpati* consecrated themselves *Varuna* cursed them ”

80. *SAIC*—p 47

81 cf my article—‘*Heretical Sects*’

with prejudice and we have to study them with due caution. The Vrātyas had their own distinctive mark.⁸² We have seen above that the *Gārūṅgas* formed an important sect of the *Sāṁs*.⁸³ Wilson believes that the God must have been credited with swallowing poison. Even to this day, there are some votaries of Śiva, who take delight in showing their indifference to worldly objects by eating and drinking not only ordure and carrion, but also poisonous acids and nails.⁸⁴

The *Yati* was the most ancient ascetic among the Vrātyas. D. R. Bhandarkar believes that the *Valkhānasas* were apparently the same as *Munis* and the *yatis* probably belonged to the *Aśura* community who did not worship Indra⁸⁵. The *RV* uses the term in connection with the *Bhṛgu*⁸⁶. The *Yati* figures prominently in the *AV*⁸⁷. The *Saṁhitās* depict Indra as an enemy of the *Yati*, as the following references would show—

(a) Indra gave the *Yatis* to the *Sālāvṛkas*, then they ate on the right of the high altar.⁸⁸

(b) Indra cast down *Vṛtra*, threw *Yatis* before *Sālāvṛkas*.⁸⁹

82. Pat—*Religious Sects in India among the Hindus*—p. 69

83. PB—XVII. 1. 9.

84. Wilson—*Essays on the Religion of the Hindus*, pp 223–234.

85. Bhandarkar—*op. cit.* p. 18

86. *RV*—VII 56 8, X. 72.7. the *yatis* are credited with the act of creating all existing things to grow.

87. *AV*—XX. 9. 9 XX. 49.

88. *Tait Saṁhitā*—VI. 2. 1. 5—“they overcame the *Asuras*”.

89. AB—VII. 28; About the *Sālāvṛkas*, cf the *BD*. III. 132 :
त्रित गस्त्वनुगच्छन्त क्रूराः साला वृषीसुताः ।
कूपे प्रक्षिप्य गाः सर्वास्तत एवानजहिरे ।

For other details concerning the Vrātya order and sect—cf. *AV*—XVIII. 1. 5; *SB* IV. 2. 5. 20; VIII. 2. 4. 7 ff; *ASS* II. 6. 1, 11, 5; *KSS* XXIV. 2. 23. *AV*—IX. 4. 8; *RV*—X. 8. 2; *SB*—II. 3. 4. 3, ff; *Der Vrātya*, pp. 58 ff.

The *yatis* probably came to be known as *Sannyāsi* of the Upanishadic period. The reference to the long haired *Muni* in the *RV*⁹⁰ as "wearing soiled and yellow hue garments, and as being wind clad (naked) at girdle"⁹¹, as being friend of Indra, as drinking *Viśa* (poison) alongside of Rudra⁹² is similar to the description of the long-haired *Kesinas* in the *AV*.⁹³ The *Yatis* were, no doubt, pre-aryan people having different customs from those of the Vedic aryaṇs. When the aryaṇs became powerful, they turned them into new order and placed them in the third *āśrama* of *Vaiṣṇāsanās*. We learn from the *PB*⁹⁴ that "Indra resorted to life *Vaiṣṇāsanās* who had been killed by the Asuras at a place called *Munimarana*". This particular point suggests the identity of *Vaiṣṇāsanās* with the *Munis* with whom the fourth *āśrama* of *yati* was added in due course.

The Pāśupata held the field for a considerably long period and influenced the cause of our cultural development (See discussion on philosophy). Just as the *yatis* were absorbed, similarly all other systems connected with Śiva and Śaivism were absorbed with all their variants. The Vrātyas retained the supreme position of the *Rudra Śiva* cult and declared the cult as of supreme importance. *Rudra-Śiva*, as the supreme godhead of the Universe, came to dominate the Vrātya order

90 *RV*-VIII 17. 4

91 *Ibid*-X 136, cf *BD*-III 106, 115, V. 144, VII 47, VIII. 18

The hymn on the *Kesinas* refers to the *Munis* and the hymn has seven stanzas and each stanza is said to have for its *Rn* one of the seven sons of Vātaraṇa. The *munis* were not purely sacrificers and their association with the number '7' is significant

92 *Ibid*—cf *Rudra*

93 *AV*-XI 2. 18-31

94 *PB*-XIV 4 7

and that marked their intellectual independence. The concept of the *Ek vratya* was in every way akin to the *Yati*. The indication of the association between Śiva and Yoga is found in the *AV* (XV 15) in the following words—‘Of that Vratya, there are seven breaths, seven expirations (*apāna*)’ as ‘upward, praudha, Abhyudha Vibhu Yom, dear and unlimited’. The contribution of the Vratyas lay mainly in the field of monotheism.

The Vratyas' association with seven vital airs, seven downward breath and seven diffused breath is remarkable. The upward airs were Agni, Āditya, Soma, Pavamana, waters, domestic animals and creatures. The downward breaths were, the full moon, light day after the full moon (*Asikā*), new moon, faith, *Dikṣa*, sacrifice and sacrificial fees. The diffused airs were, earth, *antarikṣa*, heaven, constellations, seasons, season groups and years. These were the important possessions of the Vratyas. *Astaka* was associated with the *Sraddha* cult. The diffused airs of the Vratya included some calculations of seasons and years. The *Atharvaveda* (XV) also contains a reference to the seven oblations for *Pitṛins*. Some of the gods, invoked to help the *Rṣi* (*AV*—XIX 43) to attain *Brahman*, are also included in the list of seven vital airs of the *Vrātya*. *Ek vratya* is also called *Ekarsī*. The association of the *Munis* with seven (7) in *RV* has its counterpart in the *AV* which preserves a tradition of the association of the number seven with the *Vrātyas*. *RV* (X 5) says—“Seven are the pathways which the wise (fathers) have fashioned”. According to the *SB* (VI 1, 1, 1 ff) the *Purusas* are seven and these seven becoming one come to be known as *Prajapati*. We have seen above that *munis* were not sacrificers and the same was the case with the *Vrātyas*. It reminds us of the association of the *Saptarātra* cult with ancestor worship.⁹⁵

95 *Saptarātra* as a cult occurs in the *Agnipurāṇa* (chapter-39) and vaguely in the *Matsyapurāṇa* (chapter 21). Cf. *RV* I 8, 1,

Another important sect of the Vrātyas was *Ārhatas*. The *SB* refers to *Arhatas* and *Śramana* etc. They have also been mentioned in the *PB* (XVII. 53. 2). Some scholars have interpreted *Arhatas* as Brāhmanas. Bhandarkar calls them saints (op cit—p 18). The Buddhists are of opinion that the *Ārhatas* are those who have attained salvation or at least have reached the stage of salvation. Sometimes *Ārhatas* have been taken as persons belonging to other communities (*Vinaya*—I. 30–32, *Samyutta* II. 220). According to the *TMB*, they were part and parcel of the Vrātya civilisation. According to Rhys Davids, in general sense, every Buddha was an *Ārhatta* and Rahula claimed to be *Ārhatta*. Even about 73 women are said to have become *Ārhatas* during Buddha's lifetime (*ERE*—774 ff). The Buddhists, being heretical themselves, came to be classified as *Ārhatas* and *Yaudhas* by those who belived in the orthodox system. The *Sūtras* mention *Arhantas* and *Yaudhas* among the Vrātyas, corresponding respectively to Brāhmana and Kṣatriya in the Brāhmanical hierarchy (*The Vedic Age*, I 256). Their association with the Vrātyas is evident from the *TMB*. The very fact, that they have been classed as important sects, proves the extension of the Vrātya system and also of the prevalence of certain customs arising out of the different meaning of the words "*Arhantas*" and "*Yaudhas*." The places, denounced by the orthodox aryan as a land of the Vrātyas, ultimately became the cradle of two important religious systems like Jainism and Buddhism and also of Ajvikaism. Early Buddhists were largely recruited from the Vrātya Kṣatriyas⁹⁶. *Nidānasūtra* also throws some light on this aspect. Buddha indirectly refers to the existence of orthodox cult when he says—

1. 22 B, 1. 11 B, X 72, X 136, X 5, AV XIX 43, XV *Bṛh-up*—2. 5–36; *Chāndogya*—2. 9 1 ff.

BSS. XVII. 21, DN—XXXIII, XXXIV, *Mahāparinibbāna-sūta*—III.

65, *Vishnu Purāna*—1. 2 45 ff.

96. BN. Datta—*Studies in Indian Social Polity*, pp 273, 310

"knowing the mystic verses, one who had mastered the three Vedas"⁹⁷ It appears that the fourth Veda had, by that time, not come to be recognised

III

TANTRA

In our description of the cult of the Vratyas, we have shown their connections with the goddess worship which ultimately formed the basis of *Tantricism* in India. Eastern India has been the main centre of the *Tantric* cult and even today, Nepal, Kamrupa, Bengal and Mithila are regarded as the chief centres of *Tantra*. Mother goddess is as old as the Indus valley civilisation. The *MBH* speaks of the worship of female demon by *Vahlikas*, identified with the Vratyas. The cult of mother goddess is, as such, very old and eventually numerous additions and modifications have been made from time to time. The Vratyas have been described as soothsayers, wizards, wanderers, Yogi, irreligious and what not. The *AV*, associated with the Vratyas, is also noted for its *tantric* importance and it can be taken as the starting point of the *Tantric* studies. The association of *Pumschali* with Ekvratya is a pointer in this direction.

Tantra is derived from the root *tan* to spread. It is suffixed by '*tran* — "starting from that of web or warp, it came gradually to stand for an uninterrupted series, orderly ritual"⁹⁸, the doctrinal theory and finally its literary expression⁹⁹ or injunction, regulation and Śastra (*Vidhi, Niyama* and treatise)¹⁰⁰. In the *tantra*, the conception of deity as a supreme personality (*Parahanta*) and of the double aspect of God in one of which He realises or becomes the Universe

97 *DN*—I, p. 88

For Hauer's views—cf. *Der Vrātya*—p. 58 ff

98 W. Woodroffe—*Shakti and Shakta* p. 50

99 Payne—*The Śaktas*—49

100 Woodroffe—*op. cit.* 50

The description of the *Ekvrātya* in the *AV* (XV) is worth studying in this light. The *tantric* idea of the production of the universe by the blending of male and female principles owes its development to the popularisation of the *Sāmkhya* philosophical idea of the union of two principles *Purusa* and *Prakṛti*. Others hold the view that the philosophy underlying the *Tantras* are a modification of *Sāmkhya* and *Vedānta* systems¹⁰¹. It is possibly a development of the *Śiva Śakti* cult which was prevalent in pre-aryan times. The *Śvetasvatara upanishad* points out that *Maya* is *prakṛti* and its own *Maheśvara*. The *Sāmkhya* doctrine itself is ascribed to the *Vrātyas* or the proto-Indians. The assumption may not be correct but then one thing is clear that the *Sāmkhya* had no foundations in the orthodox systems. *Śiva-Sakti* can be equated with *Purusa-prakṛti* of the *Upanishads*¹⁰². If the identity of *Tāntricism* and *Śaktism* be accepted, we can ascribe its origin to the *Vratyas*.

According to the *MBH*, *Śaktism*¹⁰³ may be traced to an earlier period. There is a reference to the cult of *Śakti*. There occur such names as *Bhagalinga*¹⁰⁴, *Maheśvariprajā*¹⁰⁵

101 S. N. Das Gupta—*History of Indian philosophy* I 171

102 Avalon—*Principles of Tantra*, cf. Ward—*History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindus*, Also Cf. Farquhar—*Outline of Religious literature in India*—p. 199 ff.

It is rather strange that the 'Tantra' is not mentioned in the *Amarakosa*. The Chinese travellers between 400 and 700 AD do not refer to *Tantra*. Avalon takes them to a considerable earlier date. Farquhar believes that *Tantra* took a definite shape sometime after the seventh century AD.

103 *MBH*—VIII 76–78 (*Sauptikaparva*) refers to the Pāṇḍava warriors seeing the embodiment of *Kālī* having bloody mouth and eyes, of black & sage, wearing crimson garlands. also cf. *Ibid*—VIII 44, 25–26.

104 *Anuśāsanaparva*—*Adhyāya*—58 3

105 *Ibid*—45 217

Mātṛkas ¹⁰⁶, *Bhagadeva* ¹⁰⁷ etc. Jarā, a demoness, is installed in every house and is called *Grhadevatā* in the *Sabhāparva* ¹⁰⁸. Here we have to bear in mind that the *Rigvedic* expression *Trayambaka* must be distinguished from the one mentioned in later literature. *YV* calls *Ambikā* a sister of Rudra. ¹⁰⁹ While in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* ¹¹⁰, Rudra is called the husband of *Ambikā* or *Umā*. Interest in female deities came later on in the Aryan Society. ¹¹¹ The deliberate effort towards the amalgamation of the *Vrātya* deity into the aryan pantheon was being made. ¹¹² Since Śiva had a spouse, all other aryan gods must have one each. *Śaktism* and *Tāntricism*, if not one and the same, are at least identical in many respects and are the oldest cults of India. That is why *Tāntricism* did not find favour with the orthodox thinkers of ancient India and the later records bear testimony to this fact. The following example will substantiate the above the view point.

The antiquity of the *Kubjikāmata*, a school of *tantra*, is vouchsafed by the fact that a Gupta manuscript has been found; that *Kubjikā* is quoted by Abhinavagupta in his *Trīṇīśikā*. The *Kubjikā* presupposes the existence of other schools, viz, *Devayāna*, *Pitṛyāna* and *Mahāyāna*.¹¹³ We further learn that the

106. *Salyaparva*—47. 1 ff.

107. *Āśvalāyaṇaparva*—143. 15.

108. *Sabhāparva*—18 1 ff

109. This hints at the possibility of brother-sister-marriage prevalent among the *Vrātyas*.

110. *Taitt. Āraṇyaka*—X, 18.

111. Payne—*op. cit.* pp 37-8

112. *Viṣṇu-Sarasvatī*, *Vārāha Vārāhī*—etc. cf *Mundakopaniṣad* 1. 2. 4.

113. H. P. Sāstric—*Nepal Darbar Catalogue*—(LXXVIII-LXXX)

दक्षिणे देवयानी तु पितृयानस्तथोत्तरे ।

मध्यमे तु महायान शिव सज्ञा प्रगीयत ॥

cult is derived from the non Vedic sources,¹¹⁴ and that it comes from outside India¹¹⁵ The system is described as coming from the west Its tendency and its attitude towards other religion may be inferred from the text¹¹⁶ which enjoins *Prayaschitta* for killing the priests of various sects The author is apprehensive of the fact that the pouring of the Magas or the magians (from Scythia and Persia) would one day be equal to the Brahmanas Konkana, Chola, Vahlīka, Saindhava, Gurjara, Lada, Kāmarūpa, Bengāl, Magadha and other places are mentioned in the text Magadha not only figures in the *AV* but also in such an important *Tantric* text of a later period In almost all the important scriptures of the heretics, the Magadhas, despised in the early Vedic literature, figure prominently and play important part as well Anybody, departing from the orthodox cult, was derided at and we have an example of Śamkara, who was called a *Prachchhana Bauddha*, whose philosophy of *Māya* did not please all *Tantra*, in the present form, might not have been the result of the Vratya experiment but this much can be said with some amount of

114 *Ibid*—रागस्यसुरभानास्तिनि सदिग्धकरीपरा ।

चतुर्विंश सहस्रस्य तस्यैवाङ्गस्य चार्द्धत ।

तन्मायाद्यष्ट सत्यतु सहस्र यदुदीरितम् ।

तत्सार देवदेवेशि कुलमाणे कुलमाणे च सस्युः ॥

115 *Ibid* (LXXX) गच्छत्व भारतवर्षेऽधिकाराय सन्त ।

पाठोपपठक्षेत्रेषु कुरु सृष्टिरनेकया ॥

गच्छत्व भारतेवर्षे कुरु सृष्टिस्त्वमीदृश ।

एकवेदा एत्रैवयोगिनः परित्यज्यन्त्य

एकैकस्य परीवारान् कथयामि समासत ॥

—Herein five *Pithas* of Orissa, Jalandhara, Maratha Mālanga and Kāmakhya are mentioned

116—*Ibid*—ब्राह्मणस्तु तदा देवी प्रमादा पतितोभवेत् ।

लक्षैर्विंशतिभिः शुद्धिं पञ्चभिस्तु प्रमादत ।

बीराहन्त निहन्ता च द्विनादिगुणे विप्रुध्यते ।

नाकूज रीद्रयाश्चैव आनानाहत चेनसा ॥

For a detailed description, also consult D P Chattopādhyāya—*The Lokhyat*

(The text is ungrammatical)

certainly that the system had a pre-aryan beginning. Even in Bihar, in most of the places associated with Śakti, the keepers of the *Pithas* are low caste people. Hinduism, is, in large measure, indebted to the pre-aryan system and one such example of indebtedness is the *Tantra*.

Some of the fundamental concepts of the Śaiva and Tantric systems are *Jyotiḥ Bindu, Nada Kundali, Nirbijal arāṇa* ¹¹⁷ *Om* which in the expression of Śiva is also called *Jyoti* ¹¹⁸ *Nada* and *Bindu* are the two concepts always mentioned together. When *Śakti* is stirred up by the creative urge of Śiva there arises *Nada* whence emerges *Bindu*. The *Tattvaparakasa* (211) of Bhoja remarks that *Nada* and *Bindu* are included in the *Śivatattva* ¹¹⁹ *Nada* and *Bindu* find exhaustive treatment in the *Tantras* ¹²⁰ The *Svayambhūta Tantra* enumerates twenty eight *Tantras* or *Āgamas* ¹²¹ To accept Śiva without Śakti is like expecting a harvest from seeds without the intermediary of earth. Śakti is the inherent and conscious power of Śiva and as such creates the Universe. The universe is ultimately merged in Śiva, just as foam and waves rise from the ocean and are merged in the ocean ¹ When we think of Ekvratya and his position as discussed in the *AV* of the *Praśnopanishad*, it is evident that he is no other than the Śiva. The indispensable and inseparable connections between Śiva and Śakti from a fundamental

117 Somadeva in his *Tasastilaka* (VIII 39) condemns the system—
ज्योति बिन्दु कलनाद कुण्डला वायु सचर ।

118 We learn from the *JB* (1 10 34) that the *Vrātyas* were acquainted with the philosophy of *Om OM* is called *Jyotiḥ*—
Cf. Raghavabhaṭṭa's Commentary on *Sāradatilaka* 1 11—
त्रिधा शक्ति स्थिता यत्र तत्र पर ज्योतिरोमिति ।

119 नागो बिन्दु सकलौ सगणशिव तन्माश्रितौ कथितौ ।

120 Cf. *Sāradatilaka* 1 7 आसीच्छक्तिस्ततो ता । तादादितु समुद्रा ।
cf. *Prāṇasāratāntra*—1 47, 43

121 K. K. Hand pu—*Tasastilaka & Indian Culture* P 336

122 यथा कनकरक्षाद समुद्रस्थितं पुन । समुद्रं लायत तद्वत्तन्मण्डयेव लीयते ।
Sārasaṁhitā

dogma of the system. The cult of *Devi*, known under different names throughout the ages, seems to have been evidently prevalent in all ages of our history but became too much known after the seventh century A.D. The cult is ordinarily known as *Śakti* worship and we find its trace in the Indus civilisation. ¹²³

123. Hauer—Der Vrātya. p. 232 ff.—refers to certain animistic rites and customs in connection with his description of the Vrātyas in the MBH.

P. 232—"Dazu ist noch Zu vergleichen die liste in der Brhatsamhita des Varāhamihira (87, 39) * ein bestimmter Vogelzug Zeigt an, dass Gefahr droht, von einem Hund, Von einem Vrātya Brahmanen, einem Sklaven oder von einer Hure".

P. 233.—refers to a race of people having primitive religion and customs. Cf. MBH śloka quoted earlier.

P. 235—...Sie Werden Vrātya genannt (wie auch die Dāsaniya und die Videha), Leute, die den brahmanischen opferkult nicht pflegen (ayajyu), und um die sich darum weder Gotter noch Väter noch die Brahmanen kümmern.

P. 236—Rudra-Śiva and Durgā Pārvatī

P. 237—refers to Vatasāvitṛivrata—prevalent even today in Mithilā —Cf *Karpūramāñjarī*—Act IV (Hos-IV)

—"Das Fest heisst *Vatasāvitṛimahāvṛata* oder *Vatasāvitṛivrata*" das fest der Banyan-Śāvitṛī. Dieses fest wird von den Frauen Zur Zeit des vollmonds des Monats Jyesthā gefeiert un Nachkommenschaft zu erlangen. (*Story of Śāvitṛī*,—*Satyavāna*) (Cf —*Vānaparva*—III. 194)

Über die mythologische Grundlage der Śāvitṛī-Satyavat sage kann gar kein Zweifel bestehen angesichts der Tatsache, dass das Fest *vatasāvitṛivrata*, das ja der Göttin Śāvitṛī gilt, aufs engste mit der Śāvitṛī-sage verknüpft ist. (Cf. *JAOS*-XXI.)

P. 240. Cf for the identification of Dionysos, Ś'iva etc and see the discussion later on.

P. 241. for scattered references.

5 V.

CHAPTER IV

THE ORGANISATION OF THE VRĀTYAS

I

The Vrātyas, it is said, do not study, practise agriculture or trade. They call good words bad, punish the guiltless with blows, and though unconsecrated, speak *Early organisation of the Vrātyas* the speech of the consecrated. These points are remarkable in the sense that they help us in assessing the importance of the study of the Vrātya problem on a scientific basis. It is now evident that the Vrātyas had a different language and customs. If Kātyāyana is to be relied upon, the Vrātyas were skilled in dance, song and music and they were competent enough to teach all these to a company of the Vrātyas. Even those, who believe in the mystification of the *Vrātyakāṇḍa* of the *AV*, should note that while the Ṛigvedic pantheon disappeared after a particular period, the Vedic religion showed development into two different directions :—

(i) Theosophical speculation brought into existence new and abstract deities.

(ii) People's gods received recognition which was not accorded to them in the Ṛigveda and the most prominent among them was the *Ekvrātya* of the *AV*.

If the Vrātyas did not have any importance, how did they figure so prominently in the huge mass of ancient literature ? It can be said, without any fear of contradiction, that in the *Sūtra* period there was a regular contempt for the organisation of a type of people who lived in Magadha and its neighbourhood. The Vrātyas had a definite organisation of their own, having different social and economic systems. They

represented a different culture altogether. Different scholars hold different views regarding the Vratyas, though none of them can claim to be perfect in this respect. Whether they were nomadic western tribes beyond Sarasvatī¹ or the Śukla-arya in the westward², will be discussed in the last chapter. Here we are concerned only with their organisation. The Kauśitakis had a close connection with Magadhas³. The Magadhas used in the plural in the *AV*, certainly denote a tribe⁴.

A tribe, without any emblem or even an insignia of the so-called Brāhmanic culture, said to have flourished in a particular period of history, must have laid the foundations of some sort of social organisation. The Vrātyas, if taken as derived from the *Vrāta*, had a definite organisation of their own. They had their temporary settlements. They sojourned in *Vratya*⁵. They had their patriarchs. Dyutāna, who belonged to Marutas, was their house-holder or *Grhapati*⁶. According to a commentary on the *PB*⁷, *Grhapati* is said to have been the same man as supplied the *Yūpa* and *Añjana* and uttered the *Rtuyajya*. One of such *Sāmans* is *Dyautana Sāman* in honour of the Marutas, named after Dyutana. It is the *Grhapati* who establishes all over Vrātyas in prosperity or in welfare⁸. Another important *Grhapati* of the Vratya was Kauśitaka, the son of Samaśravas. Luśakapī, the son of Kha-

1 *Vedic Age*—I 266

2 *JDL*—VIII 273 (18)

3 *Kauśitaki Āraṇyaka*—VII 13

4 *AV*—V 22 14

5 *PB*—XVII 1 5 12, where *Pravṛta* may mean a sojourn. Calland explains it as follows—"leading the life of a sojourned group" (p. 455)

6 *Ibid*—XVII 1 7

7 *Ibid*

8 *Ibid*—XVII 1. 8—*Anurukta Nīdhana* refers to all deities and all the Vrātyas.

ragala, cursed them saying—"They are fallen⁹ off," Kauṣītaka was an old Vrātya leader, who, on account of having lost his virility, could not perform the sacrifice successfully and was, therefore, cursed by Luśakapī. Sāyana takes Kauṣītaka as one of the seers of the Sākhās of *RV*. These *Gṛhapatis* seem to have been the leader of different Vratya hordes. In course of the *Vrātyastoma* rite, each Vratya brought to the Vrātya leader thirty three cows since they were allowed to prosper by their leader¹⁰. We further learn about another rite known as *Ukthya* rite in connection with the *Agnistoma* ceremony. The *Uktha* (= Land) are cattle. It is the cattle that leads to prosperity. Through cattle, he leads them to superiority.

The Vrātyas had, thus, their *Gṛhapatis* and cattle. The *Gṛhapati* accepted cattle as fees for making them prosperous. Cow was an object of veneration among the Vrātyas. All these clearly indicate a definite shape of things that existed in those days. The veneration of cow is an important point in so far as the history of the *Vrātyas* is concerned. The early aryaṇas had no such respect for cows. The *PB* gives an insight into the true state of affairs obtaining in those days and especially with regard to the Vratyas. Base and censured led a Vratya life¹². They were siezed by bad fortune¹³. Destitutes were left behind to lead a Vratya life. The nine versed *stoma* of Pavamana lands, if properly followed, delivered them from their bad fortune¹⁴. It hints at filling up the fortune of the chief or the priest. Separate rites were prescribed for the old Vratyas who were precluded from sexual intercourse¹⁵. The Vrātyas are said to have held a

9 *Ibid*—XVII 4 3

10 *Ibid*—XVII 1 17

11 *Ibid*—XVII 2 4

12 *Ibid*—XVII 2. 1

13 *Ibid*—XVII 2 2

14 *Ibid*—XVII 3 1-3

15 *Ibid*—XVII 4 1-3, Cf *KSS*—XXII 4 7

sacrificial session with Buddha as their *Sthapati*¹⁶ and consecrated themselves. Calland explains it in this way—
 “Here *Sthapati* seems to occupy the place of *Gṛhapati*. The Vrātyas were not willing to beg a *devayajana* of Varuṇa, precisely because they were adherents of *Deva* and not of the usual gods¹⁷” The Vrātyas are said to have thrived in all ways after the performance of sacrifice¹⁸. There were

16. *Ibid*—XXIV, 18. 1 (b)—Cf the commentary of KSS-XXII.

4. 7—अपगम प्रजनेन्द्रिय मामर्थ्या यौवनापगमनेन स्थविरावृद्धा ज्येष्ठ सञ्जा भवन्ति । तेषां मध्ये यो निन्दितनमादिः स गृहपति कार्यः । ब्राह्म्यस्तोमाश्च लौकिकेऽग्नौ कार्यः । इति वकाचार्यः (११११४) । तेनाग्न्याहूतयोऽभिलौकिक एव नाधान निष्पन्नः । ब्राह्म्यस्तोमार्थं माधानं कार्यमित्यपरे । तथा च गृहकारिका करः । “अभार्यस्यान धीतस्य स्वापाधानं तदर्थतः ।” (११४५—*Kāśi edn*)

17. *Ibid*—P. 621 note

18. *Ibid*—XXIV, 18. 9.; Cf. *Der Vrātyas*—pp. 82 ff. He discusses in details about the final distribution of the sacrificial presents; about the duties of the *Gṛhapati* and other rituals (बहुयजमान के कर्मणि...केवलकृत्वयानि यः करोति स गृहपतेरुच्यते—*Sāyana*), sacrifice and the Vrātya order, and Buddha as the director of the celestial Vrātya.

Cf P. 122—“Meine varmutung ist,.....und die auch bei den bekehrten und ihren Nachkommen, soweit sie, weil die Sāṅkhāyana Leute, mehr an der Peripherie des brahmanischen Kulturkreises, in diesem Falle im Westen, Wohnen, in Übung blieb, bis sie mehr und mehr vom streng orthodoxen Ritus aufgezogen oder verdrängt wurde...denen als verwandten des Vrātya Rsi Kuṣṭhaka alles daran liegen musste, ihre Brüder aus der “Sünde” Zu erlösen...T. M.Br. und richteten sich wohl nach der Art des Vrātya-Haufens, für solche verwendet worden sein, die wieder vom rechten Glauben abgefallen waren...Sicher hatten die Nachkommen der Vrātya-Rsi, die ja selber den Makel (P. 123) der alten ketzerie nicht losgeworden waren, offenere Arme für die sich Bekehrenden; Vielleicht auch schätzten die Vrātya selber die Bekehrung im streng orthodoxen stil höher ein als

accordance with the sixty-one day rite. These food potencies were required for the upkeep of the people who were known as Vrātyas.

That the Vrātyas were a people and not a mystic element is evident from the *Śrautasūtras*. Their social organisation is well defined therein. Among the Vrātyas, who happens to the basest, richest and the most well behaved (devoted to learning) should be installed in the position and dignity of a house-holder¹⁹. They should eat the remainder of his food²⁰. The equipments and properties of the Vrātyas have also been indicated. The Vrātyas are said to have moved out towards the tribes²¹. Strong drink is said to have followed him²². The drink was made of barley or rice (wine or *Surā*). It may have been "*Dhanyo - Rasāḥ*"²³. Wine or strong drink is prepared out of rice even today in Chotanāgpur area of Bihar. It was probably a sort of beer. In those days, *Soma* was the best nourishment of god and *Surā* of men²⁴. These evidences go to prove that the Vrātyas were a people residing in some parts of eastern India. The difficulty, with regard to the identity of the Vrātya, has been created on account of the fact that the Vrātya has been exalted into a cosmic power. The Vrātyas were eastern tribes roaming about in bands on rough wagons covered with

19. KSS—XXII. 4. 8

Cf. *Der Vrātya*—p. 68 ff—; *TMB* XVII. 1-4; XXIV. 18; *LSS*—VIII. 6; *KSS* XXII. 4. 1-28; *ASS*—XXII. 5. 4-14; *BSS*—XVIII. 24-26; *SSS*—XIV. 69-72.

20. *Ib id*—XXII. 4. 9 (No. 8 of *Kāśī edn.*)—

“इतरे ब्राह्मणागृहपतेर्भक्ष्यं सोमादिकं भक्षयन्त असीरन् । यजमानचमसादिकं प्रथमं गृहपतिर्भक्षयति, पश्चादितरे भक्षयन्तीत्यर्थः ।

21. *AV*—XV. 9. 1

22. *Ibid*—XV. 9. 2—Griffith (*op. cit.*) translates it as wine.

23. *Ibid*—II. 26. 5—it is translated by some as juice of corn.

24. *TB*. 1. 3. 2. 2. Munda-Kol zones of ancient languages have been preserved.

now juice in the herbs, butter and fat in the milk, flesh and so on after they had succeeded in the sacrifice in

im laxeren der Sāṅkhāyana und waren bereit, für den makellosen Orthodoxen charakter höhere offer zu bringen als für den fragwürdigen der andern, weil auch bei Bekehrungen zum christentum in Indien es nicht als ganz dasselbe betrachtet wird, ob einer zur Anglican church oder etwa zu einer Baptist mission Übertritt."

Die Beschreibung zeigt den Gṛhapati der Vrātya mit seiner phantastischen Ausrüstung in Begleitung der andern Vrātya, unter denen sich die aus AV-XV. 2 bekannten Personen māgadha, Puṃśchali, pariskanda befinden. Ein Wagen, und zwar ein vollausgerusteter Kriegswagen und nicht der lotterige wagen der Kommentare der andern Texte, ist die opferstätte, die nicht weniger symbolisch—mystisch betrachtet wird als die der orthodoxen Brāhmanen. Sie haben eine dikṣā-artige Einweihung mit dem nötigen magischen Apparat. Ein Bock wird als Vernichtungszauber geschlachtet und gekocht. Honigkuchen und Gerstenbrot dienen als opfermus, den die Vrātya offenbar verzehren. Sie haben primitive Begleit- und Einladungssprüche, obwohl nicht die brahmanischen, rezitieren einstudierte Reden, schreien einander laut (scheltend?) Zu (der Gesang ist von Baudh aus dem oben angegebenen Grunde auch hier nicht behandelt—(अभिक्रीडन्ति).P. 124—...In einer Zeit, als es noch keine strenge orthodoxie gab mag es wohl so gewesen sein, dass verschiedene Richtungen mehr oder weniger gleich berechtigt nebeneinander hergingen, in sofern war der Anspruch der vrātya wohl historisch berechtigt. Aber sobald in Karuṣeṭra der neue, bald orthodox werdende Ritus entstanden war, wurde die Richtung der Vrātya mehr und mehr verketzert und zu ihrer Aekkehrung der in TMB) XVII.1) Vrātya unterziehen musste, der als wirklicher Brāhmane, nicht nur als Brahmandhu gelten wollte.

accordance with the sixty-one day rite. These food potencies were required for the upkeep of the people who were known as Vrātyas.

That the Vrātyas were a people and not a mystic element is evident from the *Śrautasūtras*. Their social organisation is well defined therein. Among the Vrātyas, who happens to the basest, richest and the most well behaved (devoted to learning) should be installed in the position and dignity of a house-holder¹⁹. They should eat the remainder of his food²⁰. The equipments and properties of the Vrātyas have also been indicated. The Vrātyas are said to have moved out towards the tribes²¹. Strong drink is said to have followed him²². The drink was made of barley or rice (wine or *Surā*). It may have been "*Dhanyo - Rasāḥ*"²³. Wine or strong drink is prepared out of rice even today in Chotanāgpur area of Bihar. It was probably a sort of beer. In those days, *Soma* was the best nourishment of god and *Surā* of men²⁴. These evidences go to prove that the Vrātyas were a people residing in some parts of eastern India. The difficulty, with regard to the identity of the Vrātya, has been created on account of the fact that the Vrātya has been exalted into a cosmic power. The Vrātyas were eastern tribes roaming about in bands on rough wagons covered with

19. KSS—XXII. 4. 8

Cf. *Der Vrātya*—p. 58 ff—; TMB XVII. 1-4; XXIV. 18; LSS—VIII. 6; KSS XXII. 4. 1-28; ASS—XXII. 5. 4-14; BSS—XVIII. 24-26; SSS—XIV. 69-72.

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"इतरे ब्राह्मणपतेर्भक्षं सोमादिकं भक्षयन्त असीरन् । यजमानचमसादिकं प्रथमं गृहपतिर्भक्षयति, पश्चादितरे भक्षयन्तीत्यर्थः ।

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24. TB. 1. 3. 2. 2. Munda-Kol zones of ancient languages have been preserved.

boards in a rather war-like fashion, owners of cattle²⁵, having their own peculiar customs and religious cults and their own social organisation.

Uneven development was a characteristic feature of the social development of the Vrātyas. It was a feature even of the social life of the early Vedic peoples themselves. Some of them moved forward. They developed contempt for those who were left behind. Those who led the Vrātya life were base because they did not till the soil nor engage themselves in trade. It is thus crystal clear that these were questions of technological development rather than matters of religious observances. They lived in tribal societies. They were, no-doubt, Vedic people. Those who reached a higher stage of social development were naturally, therefore, differentiated from those still left in the tribal stage. The *TMB* is full of contempt for the Vrātyas and it has been suggested that at a remote age all the ancestors of the Vedic people were living in *Vrātas* (or hordes). According to Sāyana there was very little difference between *Gana* and *Vrāta* (on *RV*. X. 34. 12) and both the terms indicated tribal collective life. The general condemnation of the Vrātyas is due to their collective way of living. We have in the *RV* a reference to the *Rāja-prathama* of the *Vrātas* and *Senāni* of the *Ganas*. The *Ekavrātyū* assumes immense importance in the *AV* and is compared with the Supreme Being of the *purāṇas*. Sāyana explained that this description applied only to the holy Vrātya. In the present state of our knowledge, it is not possible to agree with the assertion that "the condemnation of the Vrātyas as non-

25. Winternitz—*History of Sanskrit Literature*, vol I. 154.

Cf *CR* (1924) p. 287—Winternitz does not agree with Chattopadhyaya's views (op. cit.—P. 306 fn.). No authentic conclusion can be presented in the present state of our knowledge. For detailed discussion of Chattopadhyaya's views, see the last chapter.

agriculturists only implies that non-aryans did not practise the art of ploughing in the aryan manner". (*Enquiry*-No . 4-P. 15). The Vrātya hymns are not tainted with non-aryan practises. They have been made to look like that because of their curious ways of living. They were excluded and were not to be taught the Vedas, nor allowed to officiate in the sacrifices and social intercourse with them was strictly forbidden. The *TMB* clearly tells us that when the gods rose up to the heavenly world, some of their dependents were left behind only to live the Vrātya life. That gives an indication of the technological advance of some of the Vrātyas who proceeded ahead leaving others in the tribal stage.

II

VRĀTYASTOMA

The importance of the Vrātyastoma in the then social set up can be gleaned through the contemporary literature and other sources. Had the Vrātyas not belonged to a particular tribe of some eminence, there was no necessity of the prescription of rites for their incorporation into the Brāhmanic Order. The very fact, that the *AV* exalts them, is an indication of the fact that they held important position in the land where the fourth *Veda* was compiled. The *Niṣādas* and the *Vrātyas* had the right to perform sacrifices and learn the necessary sacrificial hymns and formulae²⁶. Pāṇini's division of *Sūdras* into '*Niravasita*' and '*Aniravasita*' indicates that certain degraded *Sūdras* with uncleanly habits like the *Niṣādas* were forced to reside outside the village or town. In the *AV*, blessings are invoked on the aryan as well as the *Sūdras*. The ancient practice of the *Vrātyastoma*, described fully in the *TMB*, shows that not only the individuals but whole tribes were absorbed into Hinduism.²⁷ One fails to understand what

26. Shamsbāstri—*Evolution of Indian Polity*—P. 151.

27 Radhakrishnan—*The Hindu View of Life*. p. 38

Sir Radhakrishnan means when he uses the term "*Hinduism*" in connection with the Vrātyastoma rites. No such term was in use then. Dange²⁸ believes that the procedure of adoption in Gana, of a stranger either single or in groups, is called Vrātyastoma in the yajña ritual. It was through this process that the strangers were admitted into the economic and social life of the commune.

The Vratyastoma, no doubt, indicates a vigorous movement.²⁹ It was a simple affair. It allowed much latitude to its performer. From a *Commentary* on Kātyāyana (1. 1. 14), we learn that the Vrātyastoma sacrifice could be performed in ordinary fire or *Laukika Agni*. It could be performed with such ingredients as could be obtained in each locality.³⁰ There were four kinds of Vratyastomas.³¹ The cultural leaders of the Vrātyas were entitled to the first kind of the Vrātyastoma.³² Those, who lived by violence and were ex-communicated had to perform the rites of second order.³³ Those, who had not yet developed criminal habits and were youngsters, had to perform rites of the third order.³⁴ According to Pāṇini, there existed some sort of juvenile groups amongst the Vrātyas.³⁵ The elders were entitled to the rites of the fourth order.³⁶ The *TMB* prescribed Vrātyastoma in four

28. S. A. Dange—*India from Primitive Communism to Slavery* p. 85

Cf. KSS—XXII. 4. 2—वात्यस्तमस्य

29. KSS. XXII. 4. 26, XXII. 4. 29-30 (Kṛṣṇa edn) वात्यस्तमोमेनेष्टुः
वात्यामावादिरेष्टुः । व्यवहार्या भवन्ति ।

30. *Ibid*—XXII. 2. 22.

31. *Ibid*—XXII. 4. 1.

32. *Ibid*—XXII. 4. 3 'This training is imparted to musicians and dancers'.

33. *Ibid*—XXII. 4. 4.

34. *Ibid*—XXII. 4. 5—Cf. PB—XVII. 3. 2

35. Pāṇini—VI. 2. 28 Cf. Agrawal—*op. cit.* 442

36. KSS—XXII. 4. 6

different forms. The dependants of the Vrātyas received *Sodāstoma* (xvii-1.4).

A more detailed account of the Vrātyastoma is gleaned through the *PB*. The Marutā was asked by Gods to deliver the stoma to those who were leading the Vrātya life.³⁷ Who were these people? Those persons, leading the life of a named group, destitute and practising neither the study of the *Vedas*, nor trade nor agriculture, were called Vrātyas.³⁸ These persons were considered unequal³⁹ but were made equal by the Vrātyastoma. All of them were firmly established. The wealth bestowing god established them among the deities.⁴⁰ They are believed to be guilty and unworthy before initiation. After initiation, they transfer their guilt and unworthiness and then become qualified to take part in the sacrifice or the *Aṅgas*.⁴¹ The Vrātyastoma, with six sixteen versed, should be performed by those who lead a Vrātya life.⁴² The Vrātyastomas deliver them from bad fortune.⁴³ In that the Agnistoma is twentyone versed.⁴⁴ Two sixteen-versed stomas⁴⁵ should be performed by those, who, being the youngest, lead a Vrātya life. In that the Pavamānas are nine versed⁴⁶ and the Agnistoma is twentyone versed.⁴⁷ The *PB* further refers to sixty one day rite of the Vrātya.⁴⁸

37. *PB*—XVII, 1. 1.

38. *Ibid*—XVII, 1. 2.

39. *Ibid*—XVII, 1. 5.

40. *Ibid*—XVII, 1. 10—This should be taken for *Agnistoma Sāman*.

41. *Ibid*—XVII, 1. 16.

42. *Ibid*—XVII, 2. 1.

43. *Ibid*—XVII, 2. 2.

44. *Ibid*—XVII, 2. 3.

45. *Ibid*—XVII, 3. 1.

46. *Ibid*—XVII, 3. 2.

47. *Ibid*—XVII, 3. 4.

48. *Ibid*—XXIV, 18. 1—Cf.—*Details* = in *Der Vrātya* pp. 56-82;

The authorities, cited above, reveal to us that the Vrātyas are not to be taught the Vedas, nor is anyone to officiate at their sacrifice and there is to be no social intercourse with them. They are 'Sāutrīpatita'⁴⁹ and for them the Vrātyastoma has been prescribed. Visvarupa in his commentary on Yājñavalkya (III. 262) holds the view that the Vrātyastoma is to be performed for him whose *upanayana* is not held in right time. The Sodasastoma of the *PB* is employed in each of the four Vrātyastomas :—

- (i) first of which is meant for all the Vrātyas.
- (ii) the second for those who are *abhiṣapta* (wicked and lead a Vrātya life).
- (iii) for those who are youngsters.
- (iv) for very old persons.

The Vrātyas were rough in their ways and lax as regard food.⁵⁰ It is likely that the real origin of the Vrātya is now lost in the mist of antiquity. Katyāyana says : "Having performed the sacrificial rites after Vrātyastoma, they should desist from the Vrātya way of life."⁵¹ They should cease to be Vrātya and become eligible for social intercourse with

83-84; 85 ff.

Cf *Der Vrātya*—p. 84—"Man muss sich also die Vrātya mit ihrem phantastischen Aufzug als innerhalb oder doch in der Nähe des opferbereiches anwesend und da und dort an gewissen stellen von der Ferne an der opferhandlung teilnehmend denken bis sie, nachdem sie ihre Ausrüstung abgetan haben, am Finale des ganzen opfers als Gereinigte teilnehmen."

49. *Manu*—II. 38-39; XI. 191; *Tājñ*—I. 37-38; *AGS*. I. 19 5-7 *BGS*—III. 13. 5-6; *ADS*—I. 1. 1.22, *Vaṣiṣṭha* XI. 71-76, *VDS*—54. 26.

50. P. V. Kane—*History of the Dharmasāstras*—Vol II- Pt. I p 386.

51. *KSS*. XXII 4.29 (*Kāśī edn*), *PGS* II. 5.— "for such persons, he, who desires to have the sacrament performed on them, should perform the sacrifice of Vrātyastoma and then may indeed study the Veda."

he orthodox arians Sāyana perceived the difficulty raised by the glorification of the Vrātya in the *AV*. He held that the description was applied not to all Vrātyas but only to some very powerful, universally respected and holy Vrātya who was not in the good book of the Brahmanas.

In the *Vratyatāprāyaścchutanirṇaya* and the *Vratyatāsuddhisangraha* provisions have been made for the purification of the Vratyas even after twelve generations. Lengthy and trying penances of twelve years have been prescribed for purification and it has been further suggested that the Vrātyasoma is to be performed in ordinary fire. These two texts quote profusely from the ancient texts. The importance of these two texts lies in the fact that the problem of the Vratyas continued to be discussed, through the ages, by scholars as late as the late mediaeval period. The problem haunted the minds of the scholars to such an extent that they compiled various texts simply to interpret the ancient works regarding the methods of purification of the Vrātyas. The Vratyas are those who are ex-communicated and not the Brahmanas⁵². Non-Brahmanas are Vratyas and they can claim entry into the Brāhmanical society after due purification on the basis of prescribed methods⁵³. Three generations (grandfather, father and son) could be purified together⁵⁴.

52 *Vratyatāprāyaścchutanirṇaya*, p 15, [Cf p 18 where it is said — 'भव न-ब्राह्मण—' about the Vrātyas]

53 *Vratyatāsuddhisangraha*—p 2

—(a) ब्राह्मण ब्राह्मणस्तोमोऽहं—कृतो

—(b) ब्राह्मण भवन्त्यार्यविर्हिता —

—(c) पतित सावित्रिक उद्दालक व्रतश्चरेत्. ब्राह्मणस्तोमेनवायजेद्वा यजेत् ।

—(d) p 5—ब्राह्मणस्तोम कृतसति सर्वधर्मधिकारिणो निष्पापा शुद्धाः अत्र त्रिपुरुष पतितसावित्रिना पत्यत्व ब्राह्मणस्तोमे निमित्तं तत्र त्रिपुरुषाधिक पतित सावित्रीकृतेऽपि सहस्रे शतमितित्वत्रिपुरुष पतित सावित्रिका पत्यत्व भवदेवति चतुरादीना पतित सावित्रीकृतेऽपि ब्राह्मणस्तोमानुष्ठानं भवतीति 'एद्वाग्निं पुनरुत्सृष्ट मारुमेतय आरुतीयात्तोमं न पिबेत्'

54 *Ibid*—p 7—for details, we have the following statement on p 13 द्रुत्यध्ययनन्तु न भवेदेवस्मात्ती कर्मानुष्ठान एव तस्याधिकारो भवति ।

Vratyatā ordinarily means failure to have *Upanayana* performed at the right period. It is in this sense that the *Vrātya* has been taken to mean in the *Śāstras* and *Sūtras*. The *Vratyas* have been equated with *Patitasāvitrika*, and the penances, prescribed, are the *Vratyastoma* and *Uddalla kavrata*. The *Agnipurāṇa*⁵⁵ prescribes a milder penance of three *Archarras* and then *Upanayana* is to be performed again. The *Vratyastoma* is also called a *ekāṇ yajña*⁵⁶. The *Sūtra* works are definite on the point that the *Vratyas* never had the chance of performing the *Upanayanas Samskara*⁵⁷ and that is why they were called *Sāvitripatita*⁵⁸. On the question of *Prayaschitta*, all authorities are unanimous⁵⁹. *Vedavyāsa*, *Yajñavalkya* and *Baudhayana* prescribe the *Vratyastoma* only for those who are *Patitasāvitrikas*.

In connection with the description of Rudra, we have seen that the whole sacrifice was once with the *Asuras* and it was taken away by Gods⁶⁰. Rudra, the "hunter" attained supremacy and was called the mighty god⁶¹. Gods, having expelled the *Asura*, ascended the world of heaven⁶². The *Vratyastoma* reminded the *Vratyas* of their consciousness of having sprung from different sources. They differed from the *Tṛtsu Bharatas* in not being Brahmanical in culture⁶³.

55 *Agnipurāṇa*—170 8-9

56 Kane—*op cit*—Vol IV p 62 fn

57 *Āpast* 1 1, 1 22, 1 1 2 10 *PGS*—II 5 *Baudhāyana* 1 9 15

58 *AGS*—1 19, 5-7, *BGS*—III 13 5-6, *ADS* 1 1 1 22, *Vaśiṣṭha*—XI 75 *Manu* II 38 39 *Yāj* 1 37-38

59 *Manu*—XI 91, *VDS*—54 26—He prescribes a milder *prayaschitta*

60 *PB*—VIII 6 5

61 *Ibid*—XIV 9 12

62 *Ibid*—VIII 9 15

63 *Ibid*—XVII 1 9 Cf *SB* III 2, 1, 23 24—refers to the barbarism in speech which was to be avoided Cf R K Mookherjee—*Ancient Indian Education* p 139—thinks that

and differing in speech and manners. It was the *Ṣoḍāyastoma* that enabled them to attain the supreme status. They were respected almost like gods in certain quarters whatever be their incapacity to be religious teachers and whatever life they lead. They were highly venerated in ancient India⁶⁴.

The word "*base*" and "*censured*", with reference to the *Vrātyastoma* in the *PB* (XVII. 2.1) has been explained by R. R. Bhāgwat⁶⁵ as "guilty of man slaughter . . . these having fled from justice or being condemned to banishment, after passing some years among alien races, naturally yearned to return to their kith and kin." The question, then, that occurs to our mind is—whether the *Vrātyastoma* was a rite of readmission or conversion? The cattle played an important part in this rite. This peculiar ceremony was performed by a large number of the *Vrātyas* as *yajamānas*⁶⁶. Their sins could be dispelled only by four times repeating the sixteen stomas. It was the cattle that led base to superiority⁶⁷. Cattle formed a major portion of their wealth. *Vrātyastoma* of the second order was not a rite for readmission but a special rite by which the easterners were admitted into the fold of orthodox Brāhmanism⁶⁸.

In the *Vrātyastoma* section of the *PB*, we get an insight into the thorny question of the identification of the *Vrātyas*,

these barbarians were probably characteristics of the *Vrātyas*.

Cf. *Der Vrātya*—pp 171-174.

64. Aiyangar—*op. cit.*, p. 74.

65. R. R. Bhagwat—*op. cit.*—p. 360

66. *PB*—VI. 9.24; XVII. 1. 7 (Commentary)

67. *Ibid*—XVII. 2. 4.

68. A Banerjeesāstrī—*Asura India*—p. 71.

—First *Vrātyastoma* meant readmission for the degraded.

—Third *Vrātyastoma* meant readmission for such persons who stayed with the *Vrātyas* and were completely denationalised—

—fourth *Vrātyastoma* meant readmission for the old.

Cf *PB*—XVII. 3. 1; R. R. Bhāgwat *op. cit.* 360-62

the details of which we shall take into account in the last chapter. Some sort of connection between the two types of people is indicated in this connection. Those adherents of gods, who were left behind, were found leading a Vrātya way of life and hence the necessity of converting them to the fold of gods. The Marutas delivered the passage in *anustubha* metre. The matter is settled as soon as they accept the Vrātyastoma. Unless these groups were not very powerful, what was the necessity of converting them to a particular mode of living? The Vrātyas, probably original inhabitants of eastern India, did not like to give up their own national habits even when they came into contact with the westerners. When they found that their progress was being checked by these easterners, they possibly invented a sacrament for converting them. The ultimate result was that the eastern Vrātya of Magadha influenced the Vedic preachers. This influence is perceptible in more than one sphere of life and culture. The *AV* makes Vrātya a well known figure. At the end of the festival, by which the Vrātyas were converted, they used to hand over their apparel and utensils to other Vrātyas or an inferior Brāhmana of Magadha, who bears away the defect inherent in them. Since the Magadhans did not conform to the orthodox rules, there is a definite contempt for them in the *Sūtra* period. A *Māgadha* is prescribed for an undignified rite⁶⁹ and also in the Vrātyastoma⁷⁰. The recent excavations at Kausambi throw some interesting sidelights on the history of the Vrātyas. The procedure of *Syenānāga* shows certain peculiar features which are conspicuous by their absence in that of the *Syenaciti*. The priests engaged in the *Syenānāga* are to be selected from the Vrātyas^{70A} and they are required to wear deep red turbans

69 JB—II. 404

70 Oldenberg—*Buddha*—P 400 fn

70. (a) *LS* VIII 5.1 व्रातीनानां यौधानां पुत्राननूचानां नृत्विशो वृणीतश्चेनस्य,

Also G. R. Sharma—*Excavations at Kausambi* (1960) PP 137-138

and clothes (*LSS*. VIII. 5.8; *KSS*. XXII. 87; *ASV. SR.* III. 7.4; *AP. SR.* XXII. 4.23). In this rite the *Yupas* are made of *Tilvaka* or *bādhaka* trees (*KSS* XXII. 81). The *Dakṣiṇā* consisted of animals with bodily defects (*KSS*-XXII. 91; *LSS*-VIII. 5.16). It was *Ekaḥ* or one day-sacrifice (*KSS*. XVII. I. *PB* XVI.XIX). Thus it appears that for all types of undignified work, a *Vrātya* was selected. A *Vrātya* was usually treated with contempt by the so-called orthodox people. It is no wonder, therefore, to infer that *Vrātya* sources have been destroyed by them.

The main object of the *Vrātyastoma* was to attain prosperity. The ceremony transformed them into *Dvijas*.⁷¹ The *Vrātyastoma* was a part and parcel of the then social system. Between the period of the *PB* and the *Śrautasūtras*, the practice of the *Vrātyastoma* seems to have gone out of use because we find that *Lāṭyāyana* fails to bring out clearly the significance of the term. The *Sūtrakāras* do not seem to have been clear on the actual meaning and significance of the *Vrātyadhama*.⁷² They also fail to make any distinction between the various kinds of the *Vrātyastomas* and mix them up in a strange manner. In this respect, *Kātyāyana* is more explicit in the sense that he, at last, succeeds in clearly enunciating the purpose of the *Stoma*. *Kātyāyana* calls the *Stoma* '*Gaṇayajñah*'.⁷³ *Kātyāyana* requires a *Gṛhapati* for all the four kinds of *Vrātyastoma*.

71. *LSS*-VIII. 5. 29.

72. *Ibid*-VIII. 6. 28—सर्वे एव ब्राह्म्या पूर्वोक्तानि ब्राह्मणानि दधुः;

Cf. *KSS* (*K*)-XXII. 4. 24.

73. *KSS* (*Kaśī edn.*) XXII. 4—चत्वारो ब्राह्मण्योना गणयज्ञाः In the *KSS* (*K*) we have got a different reading. Cf. XXII. 4.2 where we have ब्राह्मण्यः । The association of the *Vrātyas* with *Gaṇa* is very remarkable. There seems to have been some sort of loose democratic and republican element in their organisation. Marxist scholars like Kosambi, Chattopadhyay, Dange and others are divided over the interpretation of the term.—'Gaṇa' and *Gaṇayajñah*.

C B Sen has recently published an article on the Vrātyas in the *JOI* (XII p 288 ff). Deriving Vrātya from Vrata (meaning group) he suggests that the Vrātyastoma should mean stoma for the people who belonged to the Vrāta (a tribal organisation). It differs from all other Vedic rituals in the sense that in the Vratyastoma all the people led by their chief are *yajamānas*. He is of opinion that the entire Vedic people were Vratyas. The Vrātyastoma was an adoption ceremony by which an entire Vrāta was converted. The whole question centres round the vexed theory of the derivation of the Vrātya from Vrāta. There is no doubt about it that the Vrātyas have always been taken as groups. Their association with *Gana* and *Vrāta* is worth investigating. That they led the life of joined group is evident from the *TMB* Calland's note on *TMB* (XVII, 1. 1) may be interpreted in a different way. *Ganayajñāth*, referred to above, may indicate that in the Vrātyas' scheme of life, labour was collective. The Commentators of the Vedas and allied Vedic literatures have tried to prove that the Vrātyastoma was just a religious ceremony for *Sāvitrīpatitas*. A critical study of the *TMB* reveals to us the hollowness of such propositions. As I have said above, the Vrātyas formed a very powerful group within the Vedic society with definite totems of their own. We learn from the *Jaimini Brāhmaṇa* (II. 26) that in the Vratyastoma of the *Aiṣikapāvas*, Kausitaki (author of *Kausitaka Brāhmaṇa* of the *Rgveda*) acted as *Gṛhapati*.

—We have a reference to the 'Stoma' in the early vedic literature.

Cf. *BD*—I, 115, II. 1—where Śākaṭāyana says that to Indra belonged the two *stomas*, that which is called the fifteenfold (*Pañcadāśa*) and that which is three times nine in number (*trīṇava*), Cf. *Nirukta* VII. 10, *BD* II. 15.

B D.—II. 1—आह चैवास्य द्वौ स्तोमाव आथ यो शाकटायन
यथ पञ्चदशौ नाम्ना सत्यया त्रिणवक्ष्य ॥

Whatever might have been the importance of the Vrātyastoma in the later period, it appears that the ceremony during the period of the *Brāhmaṇas* had some socio-economic importance. The ceremony, in some form or other, seems to have been prevalent during the early period of the Vedic society when its structure was mainly tribal. The *Alṣika-pāvas* suggest that the name itself is totemic and indicate that they were associated with the Divine monkey. In the early Vedic period, when the means of production had not sufficiently developed, the tribes (with their own chiefs) conducted their functions without any priest. With the growth of political power, tribal^{73(A)} societies vanished and attempts towards centralisation were made. The *AV* has correctly maintained the tradition about the Vrātyas and the *TMB* about the Vratyastoma. In the tribal society, mode of development differed and while some made progress, others lagged behind. It was the low economic status that was responsible for the condemnation of those Vrātyas who were left behind. Religious stigma was attached to them later on. The fact that the Vrātyas were the followers of Śiva (Rudra) also^{73(B)} suggests that they were tribals and the ceremony of initiation for the whole tribe was not unknown. Tribalism was a peculiarity of all the ancient societies and Vrātyas were no exceptions.

The Vrātyastoma was a great social movement headed by those who wanted to bring about a change in the outlook of the eastern Vrātyas. Their nomadic habits were not much to the liking of those who had a settled life and a definite religious structure. They, therefore, propounded a system of the Vrātyastoma through which the entire horde of the eastern Vrātyas were converted. It was only after conversion that they ceased to be Vrātyas and were entitled to mix with others on equal footing. The Vrātyastoma was probably a

73(a). L. H. Morgan — *Ancient Society*—pp. 80-81. .

73(b). M. Bloomfield — *The Atharvaveda*—(1899) p. 94.

means of mass conversion though some scholars believe that it was simply a form of re-admission into the old system. Since there was a movement towards centralisation and expansion of political power in the later Vedic period, it was considered by the expansionists to be a matter of great political importance to bring these roving bands of the Vrātyas under control. For these reasons, they initiated the Vrātyastoma rite. Through this rite, the Vrātyas were brought into their fold and along with them were acquired vast lands and other properties which accounted for the accumulation of power in the hands of the later Vedic kings. This was one of the factors that led to the growth of royal power in the later period^{73C}

73 (c) Also Cf the *Mahāvratā* rites—

The *Mahāvratā* ceremony was a part of the ceremony of Gavāmayana. The companions of the Vrātyas in the *Mahāvratā* ceremony are the *Māgadhas* and *Pumschali*. The ceremony is well described in the *AV* (XV). The *Mahāvratā* is like the *Soma* ceremony. *Hota* is in the centre here (For details—Cf *Der Vrātya*—p. 246 ff.)

Der Vrātya—P. 179—Rv VIII, 48, 8 erklären sich die heiligen Sänger für des Königs Soma Vrātyān. In der *Taitt. S.* 1, 8, 10, 2, steht Vrātya neben Vrāta.

P. 180—Diese Bildung ist der vorigen analog, denn auch dort haben wir die Reihe Vrāta, Vrātya, Vrātya, so dass also beidemal Vrātya bedeutet, „Zu Vrāta in Beziehung stehend, wenn auch die genauere Bedeutung der beiden Vrātya verschieden ist.“ (ASS IX, 2, 1; IX, 4, 15)

य आदितमि सत्रप्रत्यमिव चरेत् प्रवसेद्वा

X, 17, 8, *VS.* 1, 5, *TB* 1, 7, 4, 3, *KB*, 27, 3, *KSS*, VIII, 7, 23, XII, 2, 12.)

Ob allerdings Vrātya in den Vrātyastoma und im XV. Buch des Atharvaveda grammatisch in der von Haradatta angenommenen Weise von vrāta, Vrātya abzuleiten ist,

III

Religion and Philosophy

Whatever be the nature of the religion of the Vrātyas, it was probably felt by the expanding aryaans in the later vedic period that along with the stern political measures, the religious and social susceptibilities of the Vrātyas should also be decried as irrelevant and meaningless. Hauer has shown that the Vrātyas were a class of heterodox nomadic holy men, whose practices included sympathetic magic, exorcism, ritual dancing and cursing their opponents. We have already discussed the importance of the order and sect of the Vrātyas. The religion of the Vrātyas is intimately connected with their roving habits and character and hence it needs a separate treatment.

The Vrātyas believed in ghosts, witches, sorcerers, demons of all descriptions and the ministration of priests consisted chiefly in pronouncing of set spells and charms. *Sūtas* and *Māgadhas* played an important part in their religious life and belief. According to the *Pṛthu-Vaiṇya* legend⁷⁴, *Sūta* and *Māgadha* sprang out of the first consecrated monarch. They are specially designed to sing the praises and to act

bleilet zu erwägen. Immerhin darf nicht überschen werden, dass Hardatta Vrātya in AV XV....

P. 181—Hardatta hat dies gewusst, denner sagt, dass mit dem in V. 15 gemeinten "Brāhmaṇa" ein zum AV gehöriges Stück gemeinten sei (also eben AV 11-13). Er hat also den Vrātya in AV XV in eins gesetzt mit dem im heiligen Dienste wandern Atithi des AP. Dh. S. II. 3. 6.

Cf pp. 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192.

P. 197. FN.—; 204, 205 fn, 208;

P. 210 (Cf Bhattikāvya—IV. 12); P. 212, 213 (All for Vrata, Vrata, Vratina and Vrātya)

pp. 218 ff—for *Savitrapatila*

P. 220—ff—P. 244 ff—.

74. VP—52. 138-39.

as the bardic repositories of the annals and chronicles of imperial dynasties founded by *Pṛithu*. They chronicled similar histories of the *Devas*, *Rsis* and important people⁷⁵. The *Sūtas* also followed a number of inferior position and professions, e. g., of soldiers, chariot drivers, healers of bodily ills etc.⁷⁶ The *Sūta* is also the name of a court official (one of the eight *Viras*) who sustains the king at his *Ekāha - Sattra*⁷⁷ and one of the eleven *Ratnins*⁷⁸ at the *Rājasūya* ceremony. *Sūta* is described as a king maker in the *AV*⁷⁹. The *Sūta* is spoken of as *Ahantavya*⁸⁰ (invulnerable). The *Sūta* had a great respect in ancient India and the *Sūta-Māgadhas* and their ministrations consisted chiefly, according to the parts of the country of which they were natives, in pronouncing the set-spells and charms. The *Vrātyas* practised exorcism and ordained elaborate expiatory rites for the sins real as well as imaginary. The kings and the nobles often held discussions on cosmogonic and theosophic subjects, which they did not impart to the common people, since they were treated as esoteric science^{80(a)}

Since various types of aboriginal tribes were included in the ranks of the *Vrātyas*, they had a sort of republican

75. *Ibid* — I. 31-32—See *Vrātya's* concept of history.

76. *Ibid* — 62.140

77. *PB*—XIX. 14

78. *SB*—V. 3.1.5.

79. *AV*. III 57.

80. *Tait. Samhita*—IV. 5 2. It has been suggested that the *Sūta* is a *Mahāmata*, just as the *Māgadha* is a *Prajāpati*.

80. (a)—cf *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up*, *Der Vratya* P. 197 footnote—Darnach wäre die Bedeutung Von Ujjya Hier an unserer Stelle entscheidet aber die situation die Bedeutung Die Gārgi legt dem Yājñavalkya Zwei Fragen Vor, die Sie einleitet mit den Worten " Wel ein Heldensohn aus dem Lande der Kāśī oder der Videha Ujjyam dhanur adhiyam Kṛtvā Zwei Rohrpfeile, mit denen er den Gegner durchbohren will, 'n die Handnimmt und auf ihn losgeht

constitution as Patañjali would have us believe⁸¹. They had no fixed or settled home and as such they could not develop anything useful for the whole of the community. In spite of their being hard workers but of unsettled habits, they could not stabilise thinking for common good. N. N. Ghose says—“In the country of Magadha, of intensified fecundity and death, the gods, that count, are the great Vrātya Gods, who, as the case may be, originate, preserve, or destroy all creatures, Prajāpati, Viṣṇu, Rudra-Mahādeva - Isāna⁸².” It has been pointed out elsewhere that the Vrātyas were non-sacrificers and as such they were different from the aryaṇas. To be initiated into the sacrificial system, they had to pass through the Vrātyastoma rites⁸³. It was a collective ceremony in which a *Sthāpati* was a necessity to represent the group. Their dress also was different from that of the aryaṇas. The leader of the Vrātyas, Ekvrātya, drank wine and his various manifestations were Bhava, Śarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Rudra, Mahādeva, Isāna—the gods to whom the Vrātyas paid homage. We have discussed earlier that the admission of Rudra in the Vedic pantheon was not very peaceful. We have to bear in mind here that neither Mahādeva nor his wife was invited to the *Dakṣa-yajña*. Mahādeva was decidedly the most remarkable god of the Vrātyas. In the conception of the *Trinity*, Prajāpati was specially designated as Brahmā to mark his pre-eminence. Popular religion, as reflected in the *Purāṇas*, adopted the *Brahmā - Viṣṇu - Mahādeva* scheme. This trinity has been the cardinal feature even of the present day Hinduism. The sectarian mark on the forehead was

81. *Mahābhāṣya*—V. 2.21.

82. *IALC*—pp. 64-65.

83. *PB*—XXIV. 18. The great sixty-one day *Sattra* was first performed by Daiva-Vrātya with Buddha as his *Sthāpati*. The Vrātyas, in course of a *Sattra* ceremony brought disaster by violating the authority of Varuṇa. They were saved by their leader, Buddha.

*Lalāma*⁸⁴ or the *Trīpunda* of the Śaivas. The unstrung bow of the Vrātya has been compared by Hauer with *Danda* or staff of the orthodox ascetic of later times (op. cit. p. 132),

In the *AV*, the Vrātyas were devotees of Rudra. They were held in high esteem. The theory of *Trigunavāda* found

84. Sampurnānanda—Op. cit.—3— तदेकमभवत्

नरुल्लाम भवत् cf *Vrātyasūddhisāngraha*

P. 25— „ यद भूमौ भवति धूम्रिममाण भेवास्मादपहन्ति ललामो भवति
मुखत एवास्मिन् तेजोदधाति

Cf. *AV*.—(Paippallīda recension)—*Rudra-Isāna-Mahādēva* identified with *Ekarātya*—अध्यात्मक मन्त्रोक्त देवस्यामात्यदेवतम् ।

Cf *Der Vrātya*—P. 307 — Wenn du Von Süden her wehst,
wehst du als König Indra Wehst du als Isāna . . .
Wehst du als König Varuna wehst du als König
Soma wehst du als Prajāpati. Du bist der Vrātya,
der Eine Vrātya (Ekavrātya)

P. 311—Deiser Ekarsi ist ebenfalls Zum Gott erhoben Worden.
AV. X, 7, 14, (in einem Liede Über den Skambha als
urprinzip, in dem alle wesen, auch die Gotter und
Kosmischen Mächte ihren stande und Bestand haben)
heist es ! „ Wo die erstgeborenen Seher (ṛṣi), die Ṛg
Verse, das Sāman den Skambha erküßrenir.

Cf *BA*.—P. 15, *JB*.—II, 222 calls.

Isāna Ekavrātya ; cf. *J. Upanishad Brāhmaṇa*—3.21.

Cf.—*Der Vrātya* — pp 334 ff.

P. 335—Es ist Verwunderlich, dass die Kauṣṭakim, deren Ahn
doch selbst Vrātya Fuhrer gewesen war, das Andenken an
die himmlischen Vrātya nicht bewahrt haben. Das alles
weist auf einen Gegensatz der meisten Zum Orthodoxen
Ritus Sich bekennenden späteren Vedischen Schulen Zu den
Vrātya hin und Kann nur so erklärt werden, dass die
Menge der Vrātya in der Vedischen Zeit noch bei ihren
ligenen Riten blieb unddas Orthodexe Soma opfer nicht
als Zentrals Mysterium anerkannte.

favour with Vrātyas and some of the basic *formulae* of the *Saṃkhya* are included therein⁸⁵. The divine Vrātya stands parallel to Ṛṣi. The divine Vrātya is acknowledged as heavenly god. (cf. *Der Vrātya* - p. 334 . ff). Only the *Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda* maintain and preserve the Vrātya tradition of this land. The association of the Vrātyas influenced other movements of eastern India, such as *Ājīvikism*, *Jainism* and *Buddhism*. A. L. Basham observes — "they (Vrātyas) had some influence upon the Ājīvikas. The latter were also given to religious dancing and singing, and their leader had the reputation of a wonder worker whose ready imprecations were most effective in their operation. The Ājīvikas also appear to have carried staves⁸⁶." Since the Vrātyas did not go by the orthodox rule, they were hated by the aryaṇas and other orthodox people of the west. It is a paradox to say that those places, denounced by the Brāhmaṇas as land of the Vrātyas and not fit to be visited by the Brāhmaṇas, later on became the headquarters of Buddhism and other heretical sects. The early heretics of eastern India seem to have been largely recruited from the Vrātyas.

For a study of the Vrātya philosophy, we have to take recourse to *Śrutipraya Commentary* of the *AV* as it is here that the philosophical point of view has been clearly set forth. Fortunately for us, the whole commentary, along with the text of the *AV*, has been ably presented and discussed by Sampūrṇānanda in his *Vrātyakāṇḍa*. The Vrātya is called *Ādideva*. Pure souled person is regarded as the origin and the only cause of all things on this earth. Vrātya, as the first god, is described, in details with his generating accomplishments. Their wandering actions are taken as the

85. S. N. Das Gupta—*History of Indian Philosophy*—V. p. 2.

86. A. L. Basham—*History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas* - p. 8, fn. - 1; Cf. *CHI* - I, 146; *Der Vrātya* p. 132.

causes of lively energy, i. e., through their wanderings the dormant energies of the world were released. The earliest reference to "*aprajanīta suvarṇa*" (the unborn gold) is remarkable. It is the indiscernible *Pradhāna* of the *Sāṃkhya*, which is the cause of the discernible world. The *AV* says— "Prajāpati saw in himself gold, he generated that⁸⁷." The *Vrātyas* had their own spiritual conception of the universe with different worlds in it and with a presiding deity for each, and they were all under the eternal *Vrātya*. He pervades the world in various forms as the *Udgātā* fills the universe with his chanting *Sāman* and the sounds of *OM*⁸⁸. The *AV* represents the *Vrātya* as a wandering *Sādhu*. It refers to some pseudo-*Vrātyas* or *Vrātyabruvas*⁸⁹. While they are to be driven out, the original *Vrātya* is to be respected⁹⁰. According to Griffith, the house-holder should punish him quietly by letting him feel that his fraud is detected⁹¹.

The *Vrātya* is called "the only seer, the real lord of life and the father of *Mātariśvan* in the *Pranopanishad* (2.11). *Śaṅkara* explains this word as meaning 'uninitiated' because of his being the first born, and there being no one else to initiate him; therefore pure by nature. The fourteenth *Sūkta* (*AV*. XV. XIV) is a repository of esotericism. It is in this very *Sūkta*, that we find the beginning of the problem of *Prakṛti* and *Chetanā*. Here we have the non-duality of the *Pradhāna* or the *Puruṣa*. It is here that the spiritual conception of the *Vrātyas* has reached its climax. The universe is pervaded with the generating energy and it is one regulated lively body. Some sort of *Prāṇāyāma* is indicated.

87. स प्रजपति सुवर्णमात्मन्पश्यन् तत्प्रजाजनयत् । *AV*. (XV. 1.2).

88. *AV*. 3.8—सामासाद उद्गीथोपश्रवः

89. *Ibid.*—XV. 13.11 - यस्यामात्यो मात्यद्रुवो नामविभ्रत्य तिविगृहाना-
गच्छेत् ।

90. *Ibid.*—XV. 15.12.

91. Griffith—*op. cit.*—195.

in this *Sūkta* as we find here *Ekavrātya* standing 'erect' for a year⁹². The highly mystic thought of this *Sūkta* is indicative of the fact that the Vrātyas were great philosophers and the early traces of their philosophy can be traced to *AV. VIII.9*^{92A}. Rudolf Roth minimised the importance of this *Sūkta* and called it useless. The *Annamīmāṃsū* was the greatest concern of the Vrātya and an indirect reference to this aspect can be found in the *AV. (VIII.9)*. The fourteenth *Sūkta* of the *AV. (XV)* is the best specimen of Vrātya's mysticism, as the following discussion will prove :—

- (i) "*Mana*⁹³"—in the fourteenth *Sūkta* refers to "mind, will or resolution".
- (ii) "*Bala*⁹⁴"—(strength) refers to the pre-eminent attribute.
- (iii) Water ;
- (iv) *Āhuti*—offering or sacrifice.
- (v) *Viraj*—meaning not clear; moved as Viṣṇu.
- (vi) *Oṣadhi*⁹⁵—herbs, moved as Rudra.
- (vii) *Svadhā*—and so on.

These terms have been used in connection with the forms and manifestations of *Ekavrātya* and they remind us of the oft quoted Rigvedic stanza—"Ekaṃsadbiprā bahulā bhavanti"—(*RV. - 1.164.46*). The theosophic doctrines, enunciated here, are of immense importance for the study of the Vrātya philosophy and religion.

92. Does it represent the earliest example of Hathayoga? The three *gunas* of *Yoga*, as enunciated in the *AV. (X. 8.43)* may be sought in the Vrātya tradition.

92(a) *JB. 1.10.34* definitely states that the Vrātyas, though acquainted with the philosophy of *OM*, were bitter enemies of sacrifice and sacrificial rites.

93. *AV. - XV. 14.1. - मनोन्नादं कृत्वा ।*

94. *Ibid. - XV. 14.3 - बलमन्नदं कृत्वा ।*

95. *Ibid. - XV. 14.11.*

While the *Trayi* only was regarded as sacred in the orthodox scheme of Vedic study, the *Puranas* and the *Upanishads* have also played a great part in the formation of Vedic theology. Even a casual but scientific worker in this field will admit that the *Purānas* have been greatly influenced by the Vratya thought and culture. It was in Magadha that the synthesis of different cultures took place. The likelihood of the *AV*, being composed in Magadha, cannot be rejected outright. The *Yajamānas* also played an important part in this respect. Had the *AV* not been a purely Vratya manual, enunciating principles offending the orthodox western section of the aryaans, the *AV* would have been easily included in the list of the Vedas.

For a proper understanding of this problem, we have to take into consideration the philosophical system of the Vratyas. The *Upanishadas* favoured the idea of the renunciation of world. The *Summum bonum* of the *Upanishad* is that the path to happiness lies in complete renunciation and not in the perpetual hankering. The enjoyment of material happiness creates a desire for more of it and it remains unfulfilled with the result that cravings increase. Hence it is better to hanker after the eternal truth. The idea developed independently and may be ascribed to the *Vratya Rājanyas*. *Rājanya* is a term which defies any positive explanation. At the time of creation, *Rājanya* is said to have been the arms of the sacrificed *Purusa* or the *Primal man*, who is identified with the universe⁹⁶. He is said to have been generated by *Prajāpati*⁹⁷. *Yajurveda* is said to be the womb form which he is said to have been born⁹⁸. In the *AV*, he is believed to have been born out of passion⁹⁹. It may be held that he was filled with passion.

96. *RV.*—X 90, *AV.* XIX 6

97. *Tait Sam*—VII 1.1, *SB*—II- 1.4

98. *TB*—III. 12 9

99. *AV.*—XV. 8 1.

In general terminology, *Rājanya* is the oldest designation of a *Kshatriya* and royal class. The Brāhmanical literature acknowledges *Kshatriyas* right in the basic material of the *Vedānta*¹⁰⁰. In the early stages of the aryan civilisation, there were no such separate castes as *Brāhmanas* and *Kshatriyas* and hence it would not be unreasonable to infer that the reference, in question, alludes to the *Vrātya Rājanya*. The *Vrātya Rājanyas* formed a separate order and they kept their bard priests at a respectable distance and they were called only at the time of the ministration of spells and charms. *Vrātya Rājanya* possessed esoteric knowledge of various doctrines and the aryan, afterwards, accepted the *Vrātya* faith and beliefs. So far as the *faith* of the *Vrātyas* is concerned, they appear to be free-thinkers, though believing in the various descriptions of Gods. Their highly esoteric religion and religious philosophy had to be so because most of the *Vrātyas* were intellectually unfit to follow it. The *Vrātya* god was originator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. It was under the stress of the Upanishadic dialectics that the members of the *Trinity*, later on, lost their individuality and merged with the *Ātman-Brāhman Vedānta*.

We have seen above that the *Vrātyastoma* indicated a vigorous movement (*Commentary* on *Kātyayana*-1.1.14), and could be performed with such ingredients as could be obtained in each locality (*KSS*-XXII.2.22). Through this working process, the aryan strengthened their position by admitting themselves a vast concourse of men, having different habits, thoughts and modes of living. With their admission there came a change not only in social and political outlook but also in the realm of thought. New ideas came in and all extra sacrificial ideas can be attributed to this process of assimilation.

There is little doubt that the *Vrātyas*, even after their conversion, continued to be a vigorous people and with them

came the vigorous ideas. The old sacrifices did not attract them nor satisfied their intellectual curiosity. The result was that they began to speculate on the inner meaning of the sacrifices and these bold speculations led to the theories of creation, theories about soul, material body, senses, organs of senses, organs of actions, about vital airs, about the elements of matter, about the nature of the earth, heaven, gods, unity of godhead, unity of spirit and matter, nature of sound, meaning of words, their derivation, pronunciation, change of sounds, about life, vitality, mind, food, cattle and about the whole ranges of human activities. The extra sacrificial ideas of the *Araṇyakas* and the *Upanishads* may be attributed to this grand fusion of the aryaṇas and the Vrātyas.

The most interesting point in the *Kauṣītaki Upanishad* is its plenary absolution for the believer which relates it directly to the basic philosophy of the *Bhagwatgītā*. Kṛṣṇa made this cult really important. He was not very famous in the Upanishadic period as he is mentioned only once in the *Chāndogya Upn*¹⁰¹. Kṛṣṇa stands as the divine exponent of the Upanishadic philosophy with strong pragmatic modifications. The *Śvetāśvatara Upn* emphasises the one-god cult and extols Rudra - Māheśwara. The *Upanishadas* represent the process of assimilation and adoption of foreign ritual as well as philosophy of the indigenous Brahmanas. The main theme of the *Upanishadas* and the *Bhagwatgītā* is the true realisation of supreme deity in essence. The story of *Indra-Valrochana* in the *Chāndogya* is an interesting document. It relates to their visit to Prajapati for obtaining the knowledge of the *Ātman* (cf. - VII and VIII. The VIIIth *Prapāṭhaka* solely deals with the nature of the soul). The non-Brāhmaṇi-

101 *Chāndogya* - 3 17 6 - 'When Ghorā Angirāsa explained this to Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī', - he also explained "—In the final hour one should take refuge in these three thoughts— you are the *Indestructible*, you are the *unshaken*, you are the very essence of life (*Prāṇa*)".

cal origin of the theory of the *Ātman* is indicated below¹⁰² :-

— *Chāndogya* - 5. 11. 1'-5.

—Aśvapati Kaikeyi solving the problem of *Ātman* { "Within my realm there is no thief,
No miser, nor a drinking man,
None altarless, none ignorant
No man unchaste, no wife unchaste".

(For another Version cf. *S.B.*—
10, 6. 1,).

—*Ibid.* - VII. 1. 4-Dialogue of Nārada and Santakumār.

—*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upn.* - VI. 2.8. episode of Āruni and Jaivāli.

—*Ibid.* - II. 4 - the conversation of Yājñavalkya and Maitreyi concerning the pantheistic soul^{102a}.

—*Kauśītaki Upn.* - IV. 9 - Gārgi Bālaki and Ajātaśatru—
gives a progressive definition of *Brahma*.

Hence we have to bear in mind that in all these sources Kṣatriyas alone claim to possess the knowledge of *Ātman*. Hume says^{102b}—"This conspectus of usage furnishes corroboration to the inherent probability that here (in the *Upniṣhadas*), . . . the words *Brahma* and *Kṣhatra* are class-designations, pregnant, however, with the connotation of the respective qualities"

The reference to *Māyā* as *Prakṛti*^{102c} is important in the sense that its existence is to be found in the supreme being.

102. *Ibid.*

102 (a)-References to this aspect may be found in *RV.*-1.157.2; *AV.* XII. 5.8; XV. 10.2.11 in connection with the *Vrātyas*); II. 15.4; IX. 7.0; (social classes are emphasised); *FS.* XIX. 5; V. 27; VI. 3, VII. 21; XIV. 24; XVIII. 38; X. 10.12 (with *Viś* - 'the people'); *AB.*-III. 11; VII. 21; *SB.* 11.4.3. 11.13.

102 (b)-R. E. Hume. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishadas*. P. 99 *fn.*

102 (c)-*Śvetāśvatara Upn.* - IV. 9.10.

—"This whole world the illusion maker (*Aśayin*) projects

According to Śaṅkara, *Māyā* has no real existence as the *Śakti* aspect of *Brahman*, but *Māyā* is mere illusion. For Śaṅkara, there is nothing apart from *Brahman* in this world, as he believes in the doctrine of the sole reality of the *Brahman*. Vrātya schools, with the exception of Kāśmir Śaivism, have maintained the reality of the *Śakti*. The *Śvetāśvatara Upn* "contains the theism of the *Upanishad* in its most mature form The attributes of the supreme soul are often given in very general terms¹⁰³" According to the *Śvetāśvatara Upn*, by *Māyā-nivṛtti* (cessations from every illusion) one gets salvation¹⁰⁴. By knowing God, the distress is destroyed, there is a cessation of birth and death, by meditating upon *Him* there is the dissolution of the body and being absolute (Kevala) his desire is satisfied¹⁰⁵. Nothing higher is to be known and then *Peace* is attained¹⁰⁶. The gradual rise to pre-eminence of a substratum in the tradition, hostile to the general tone, played a leading part in the development of syncretism. The Vrātya cult and syncretism bring to our memory some of the submerged tradition which survived despite the best efforts of those who tried to nip it in the bud. The Vrātya hymns of the *AV*, record a particular religious practice in which *yoga* played an important part. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (1.6.12) mentions a class of people of very ancient times who were free to live wherever they liked, free from all obligations, pure at heart and blameless in action They lived in an atmosphere of perfect freedom not circumscribed by conventional dogmas of religious and social usages. *Sisnadevas* and *Vāmadevas* worship-

out of this (*Brahma*) And that the mighty Lord (*Maheshwara*)
is the illusion maker (*Māyin*)

—Here *Prakṛti* has been identified with *Māyā*

103. R. G. Bhandarkar - *Vaiṣṇavism Śaivism*, P 157.

104. *Śvetā-Up* - 1.10

105. *Ibid* - 1.11

106. *Ibid* - 4.9.

ped the phallus and had no faith in the Vedas. The *Chandogya Upan* describes *Vamadeva Vratas* and *Vratinas* and takes them as originator of *Kapalakaism*^{106(a)}

The Ekavratya, later on, developed into Śiva^{106b} or the *Tesup Hepit* or *Ma Athis* cult of Asia minor, and was infused with serenity and loftiness unparalleled in Indian literature (*RV* 1.164 – एकसदिप्रा बहुधा भवन्ति). Insistence on *Śradha* or faith is a remarkable feature of the *Vratyakanda* of the *AV.* and this can be taken as the precursor of the later *Bhakti* movement. The *Śradha* is to be based on knowledge. *Matarisvan* and *Pavamana* were connected with the Ekavratya as the horses of his chariot. Ekavratya became a *Tapasi* and practised penance standing for one full year, thus setting forth the system of *yoga*. The whole system of Śaiva worship underwent a complete metamorphosis^{106c}. The *Vratya yoga*

106 (a)–A I O C VI – *The Lokayuktas and the Kapilikas* (D R. S. n.)

Cf R. K. Choudhary–*Heretical Sects in the Purāṇas*—in the *ABORI* of 1956

106 (b) D. R. Bhandarkar Commemorative Volume pp. 301–303, cf. *SAIC*—pp. 40–48

had seven vital airs and seven downward breaths. Śiva is depicted as yogī par excellence.

The system of the *Pāsupatas* held the field considerably for a long period in our history and influenced the contemporary life and thought to such an extent that even the *Śvetāśvatara Upn.* and the *Ātharvaśiras Upn.* have faithfully maintained their account. Śaivism had become a popular faith in the Brāhmanical period. Śiva as Paśupati came to be a recognised fact in the *AV.* The *Śvetāśvatara Upn.* recognises certain philosophical systems like *Paśu*, *Pāśa* and so on. The *Sāntiparva* mentions *Pāsupata* as one of the five systems of philosophy¹⁰⁷. Śiva, husband of Umā and lord of the *Bhūtas*, proclaimed the *Pāsupata* system¹⁰⁸. The whole system of the *Pāsupata* has been enunciated in the *MBH.*¹⁰⁹.

—For an interpretation of the *Praśneb* II. 11 cf. *Der Vratya*, p. 310.

Cf. P. 311—Auch in der *Calika Up* taucht der *Vratya* als Urprinzip auf, und zwar neben höchst ehrwürdigen, die uns in der Höhe der mystischen Spekulation begegnen wie Brahman, Skambha, Rohita, Prāna, Puruṣa und solchen, die dem rituellen Bereich entstammen wie der Brahmacārin, ja neben solchen aus der primitiven Sphäre wie Anaḍuh und Uccista, Nur eins ist daraus zu entnehmen, dass man den *Vratya*, der in *Av. XV* besungen wird, in dieser *Upniṣad* unbedenklich zu den höchsten kosmischen Prinzipien rechnete, obwohl sein irdisches Gegenstück doch schon zu der Zeit als verfluchter Ketzer galt.

107. Five systems were— (i) *Sāṅkhya*, (ii) *Yoga*, (iii) *Pañcarātra*, (iv) *Vedas* and (v) *Pāsupata*; Cf. *MBH.* XII. 349, verses 64, 67.

108. *MBH.*—XII. 208-95. Śiva promulgated the *Pāsupata Vrata*. Cf. S. N. Das Gupta — *History of Indian Philosophy* — Vol. V.

109. Description of the *Pāsupata* ascetics in the *Anuśāsanoparva*.

तेन संदिग्धं सर्वज्ञं भस्मना बद्धं चरिणः
जटिला मुण्डिता वाऽपि नानाकार शिखण्डिनः ।
विकृता पिङ्गलाभिश्च नतानाना प्रकारिणः
भेषं चरन्तः सर्वत्र निःस्पृहा निःपरिग्रहाः ।

There were distinctions between *Śrauta* and *Āśrauta Pāsupatas*. The *Śrauta* was followed by the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Āśrauta* by the non-*Brāhmaṇas* after the emergence of *Lakuliśa Pāsupatas*¹¹⁰. *Pāsupatas* are frequently mentioned in the *Purāṇas*¹¹¹. The *Śrībhāṣya* of Rāmānuja speaks of four classes of *Saiva* – *Kāpāla*, *Kālanukha*, *Śaiva* and *Pāsupata*¹¹².

Śaṅkara in his *Bhāṣya* on the *Vedāntasūtras* (2.2.37) refers to the *Pāsupatas* simply as *Māheśvaras*, followers of the system propounded by Śiva¹¹³. Vācaspati refers to them in his *Bhāmati*¹¹⁴. He explains *Māheśvaras* as referring to the four Śiva sects including the *Pāsupatas*, but his interpretation of *yoga* and *Vidhi* is based on *Pāsupata* texts¹¹⁵. The *Atharvaśīras Upn.* is the main source of information on this point. The Gods went to heaven and asked Rudra who he was ? He replied that he alone was, was in all Quarters, in *Gāyatrī*, men and women became invisible to them". The Gods raised arms and prayed—"He who is *Rudra*, *Māheśvara*, *Umā*, *Skanda*, *Vināyaka*, the *Sun* etc." One *Rudra* is *Isāna*, *Bhāgavata*, *Māheśvara* and *Mahādeva*¹¹⁶. For the know-

110. *Lakuliśa*, i. e. holder of *Lakula* or *Loguḍa* i. e. a club. Cf. *JBBRAS* – XXII. 151 ff ; G. N. Rao – *Elements of Hindu Iconography* – II. ' 1, p. 19. The sect seems to have come into prominence in about 1st century A. D.

111. *Līṅgapurāṇa* (*Pūrvabhāga*) 8 88-100; *Skanda* 5, 3, 11, 19; *Kṛma* – (*Adhyāya*) – 11. Hiuen-tsang makes a reference to this system – Cf. *Beal* – II. 353.

112. *Śrībhāṣya* – *Brahmasūtra* II. 2.36 ; Commentators like Vācaspati and Govindānanda refer to them.

113. According to Śaṅkara *Māheśvaras* believe in five categories—*Kārya*, *Kāraṇa*, *Yoga*, *Vidhi* and *Dukhānta*, which are all *Pāsupata* tenets.

114. योगोऽप्यौकारादिध्यानधारणादिः । विधिस्त्रिवचनानादिर्गूढचर्यावसानः । .

115. Cf. *Pāsupata sūtra* – मस्मना त्रिपवणं लायीत ।

116. R. G. Bhandarkar – *Vaiṣṇavism – Śaivism* etc. p. 111-12.

ledge of Rudra, one should be a single minded devotee. The muttering of *OM* should be practised and meditations resulting in perception (*Avagati*) should be resorted to. The *Pasupata Vrata* enjoined for the removal of the noose with which the *Paśu* or the individual soul is tied¹¹⁷. The system of the *Lakulisa Pasupata* has been criticised by Śaṅkara on the ground that the *Pasupatas* regard God as operative and not the material cause of the world¹¹⁸.

Madhava in his *Sarvadarsana Samgraha* has outlined the following points in connection with the elucidation of this system

- (1) *Karya* (Effect) – is dependent and is of three kinds (a) *Vidya* (sentiency) (b) *Kala* (insentient) and (c) the sentient. Sentiency is of two kinds—external and internal and the external can be again divided into two – distinct and indistinct. The organs can be divided into effects and causes. The effected organs are the five elements and five qualities. The organs, which are causes, are of thirteen kinds, e.g., the five senses, five organs of action and three internal organs, viz., intelligence, egoism and mind. The Sentient or the *Paśu* (individual) is of two kinds—(1) pure and (2) impure.
- (2) *Karana* – Cause
- (3) *Yoga* (union) – Conjunction of soul with god through intellect or *Chitta*. It is of two kinds—(a) characterised by action, and (b) characterised by the cessation of action.
- (4) *Vidhi* (rite or process) is of two kinds – principal and subsidiary. Various *Vidhis* have been prescribed. Amongst others, five postures have been indicated—*Krathana* (snoring), *Spandana* (trembling), *Mandana* (Limping) *Sṛṅgarana* (acting with

117 *Ibid* – Cf. Śaṅkarānanda's interpretation of the *Upanishad*.

118 R. G. Bhandarkar *Collected Works* – IV 173 ff.

amorous gestures), *avitathakarana* (acting absurdly),
avitadbhasana (talking nonsensically) 40816

(v) *Dukhanta* – (Deliverance) is of two kinds – personal
 and impersonal.

Samkara and his commentators also describe the above five topics as forming the main tenets of the Pāśupata system. The *Pāśupatas* and the *Kāpālikas* hold the same view of salvation as the *Vaiśeṣikas* and the *Naiyāyikas*. As for the *Sāṃyas*, their conception of *Mokṣa* is said to be identical with that of the *Samkhya*s. *Dukhānta* is one of the fundamental tenets of the *Pāśupata* system. The *Pāśupatas* regards this as *Mukti*, a condition characterised by the annihilation of the entire range of the specific attributes of the self¹¹⁹. The *Pasupatas* seem to have been a system of religious discipline rather than a school of speculative thought. The moral discipline of the *Pāśupata* School, according to Kaundinya's Commentary, is based on the *yamas* or modes of self restraint, viz, *ahimsā*, *brahmacarya*, *satya*, *asamvya-*
hāra *Sauca*, *āhāralaghava* and *apramāda*. Devotion to Rudra in this life and intimate association with *Him* in the life beyond is the goal of the *Pasupatas*. The highest *yoga* is absorbed concentration on the supreme Rudra, discarding shape and form¹²⁰.

119 आत्यन्तिका दुःखनिवृत्तिर्दुःखान्तः शब्देनोक्ता तामेव
 नि शेष वैशेषिकात्मगुणोच्छेद लक्षणा मुक्तिं मन्यते ।
 —सर्वं दुःखमोहो दुःखान्तःसात्मकस्तु महेश्वरैश्वर्य
 लक्षणा सिद्धिः

120 A Mysore inscription of 943 A D states that Lakulīśa, the
 traditional founder of the *Pāśupata* system, became incarnate as
 a sage named Cilluka to preserve the name and continuity of his
 doctrine, which points to a revival of Pāśupata teaching in the
 South. Another inscription, found in the temple of Harsanātha
 in the Sikar Principality of Jaipur State, mentions a scholar
 named Visvarupa who was a teacher of the *Pāṇḍarītha Lakulānāyaka*,
 i.e., the sacred book of Lakulīśa, called *Pāṇḍarītha*.

The *Śvetāsvatara Upn*, compiled by the great *Pāsupata* leader *Śvetāsvatara*, is a valuable document for the study of the Vratya philosophical system. The sixth chapter of this book deals with the theistic aspect of the Vratya system of philosophy. It insists on the existence of God who is the same as *Īśa*, *Īśāna*, *Rudra*, *Śiva*, *Māheśvara*, as the first principle, though '*Brahman*' is made to denote it. It also refers to *Pratimā*¹²¹ (image) of Rudra. There are references to *Pāsa* or net¹⁻² and to *Śiva*¹²³. *Māyā* is styled as *Prakṛti* and he who uses *Māyā* is called *Māheśvara* or *Māyin*¹²⁴. According to Madhāva, the cessation of pain is, in other systems (as in the *Sāṃkhya*) the mere termination of miseries, but in the *Pāsupata* it is eternal, the spirits and so forth, the sentient and the insentient. In the *Pāsupata*, the union results in the cessation of pains by the attainment of divine perfection. In this system, paradise and other similar spheres result in nearness to the Supreme being either followed or not followed by such return to transmigrating experiences. Some scholars have ascribed the origin of the *Sāṃkhya yoga* system to the Vratyas¹²⁵.

The editor of the *Pāsupata-Sūtra* gives the following list of succession of teachers—Nakulīśa, Kausika, Gīrgya, Mastreya, Kauruśa, Īśāna, Paragīrgya, Kapilānda, Manuśyaka, Kusika, Atri, Piṅgala, Puṣpaka, Bṛhadārya, Agastī, Santāna. Rās kara

121. *Śvet up* – IV 19 "there can be no likeness (*Pratimā*) of him whose name is great glory"

122. *Ibid* – V 13, I 11, II 15

123. *Ibid* – V 3 – In the Indus civilisation, Śiva was the lord of animals. Śiva was probably the lord of some tribes V 3—
"Thus again, having created his Yatis, the Lord (*Īśa*)

The great soul (*mahātman*), exercises universal overlordship"

For details—Cf Marshall—(i) *The Indus valley Civilisation* (II) Wheeler—(a) *The Indus Civilisation*, (b) *Early India and Pakistan*, (III) *History of Humanity*—Vol I (Pre-h story)

124. *Ibid* – IV 9-10—"The whole world is pervaded with beings that are parts of Him

125. *BA* p 13ff

Hauer considers them to be forerunners of the yogias. One important point in this system is that God *Himself* is absolutely independent. No *Karmas* can produce any fruit without the will of God¹²⁶. The *Karma* theory, which is held so high in other systems, is here regarded as superfluous.

The *Śveta Upn* (11) aims at the satisfactory solution of the problems of the meaning of life and the world and the relation of the individual to the form of the Universe. Even the evidences of Buddhist influences are not wanting in the *Upanishads*¹²⁷. It has long been suspected that the later Śivas which recognised the *AV* as their chief scripture, were closely connected with the Buddhist sects¹²⁸. In this way the Buddhist influence was transmitted to the *Prasna* and *Mundaka Upn* of the *AV*¹²⁹. There is no doubt that the *Upanishads* have got a heterogeneous structure and the evidences of non-Vedantic character are not wanting in the *Śvetasvatara Upn*¹³⁰. Cowell believes that "the *Śvetasvatara Upanishad* is the most direct attempt to reconcile the *Sāṃkhya* and the *Vedānta*"¹³¹. The theory of *Karma* which the *Pasūpatas* regarded as superfluous, was not very clear to the early Vedic scholars. After a preliminary sign of the doctrine of metempsychosis in the *AV*¹³², the notion first made its definite appearance in the

126 *Śvet up* — III 20 — "when through the (*Prasada*) grace of the creator he sees the Lord (*Is*) and his greatness

— Cf *Ibid* VI 21. This *Upanishad* is the best source for the study of the Vrātya philosophy. Another important sect was that of the Ārhatas — Cf *PB* XVII 53 2

127 Cf *Bṛhd up* 3 2 13 4 3 9 *SB* — 14 7 1 10

Mundaka Up 1 2 1, *Prasna-up* 1 2, 2 3

128 R. E. Hume *Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. 7 (1954)

129 *Ibid* — Cf — Foucher — *Étude Sur l'iconographie bouddhique de l'Inde*

130 *Śvet up* — 1 4-5, 5 1, 1 3 4-10 4 5

131 Colebrooke, *Miscellaneous Essays*, I 257

Cf *JAOS* — XVII pp 380-87

132 Hopkins — *Religions of India* p 175

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa Gough believes that this idea originated among the semi-savage people of India, connected with animism¹³³. Nothing definite on this point can be said in the present state of our knowledge. In the *Upanishads*, we find the change from the first realistic materialism to the final speculative idealism¹³⁴.

The ancient Indian conception of the philosophy of *History* is closely linked up with the *Vrātya* tradition and culture. We have discussed above the role of the *Sūtras* in the then set-up and the part they played in recording the contemporary chronicles. An important tradition maintains that the *Sūtras* narrated history to Saunaka in twelve years. The development of historical idea is not a new thing in India. The concept of history certainly differed from that of the west and this is one of the reasons why Macdonell said that there was history in Sanskrit literature. A study of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* reveals to us the contemporary idea about History or *Ākhyāna*¹³⁵. After the *Asvamedha* horses are released and till their return, the *Yajamānas* used to hear *Ākhyāna*.

133 *Philosophy of the Upanishads* — chapter I

—Theory of Karma can be found in *Brh up* 4.4.2, *Chāndogya*, 5.10.7, *Svetā up* 5.11-12, *Katha* 5.7

134 Hegel has rightly said — "If we wish to get the so called pantheism in its poetic, most elevated, and if one will its coarsest form, we must look for it in the Eastern poets and the largest expositions of it are found among the Indians" — quoted in Hume, *op. cit.* p. 70

135 *ŚB* 11.5.7.9 — य एव विद्वान्वाकोवाक्यमिनिहासपुराणमित्यहरह स्वाध्यायमधीत त एन तु शास्त्रप्रेयान्ति सर्वे कामै सर्वेभोगे ।
ŚB — 13.4.3.13 क्वा सित्व वायोविधिकान्वोप समेता भवन्ति तानुपदिशति पुराण वेद सोऽयामिति किञ्चिन्पुराणमाचक्षी तैवमेवाध्वयु स-प्रव्यति, Cf-R. K. Choudhary—Presidential Speech of History Section in the first session of the All India Maithila writers' Conference (Darbhanga-1956)

The *Rtvija* sits around the *Vedi* with the *Udgata* and the *Yajamana* sits on the golden *asandi* and the *Adhvarju* sits on the golden *dais* *Adhvaryu* then requests *Presa* to narrate history in the following words—*Bhūtāni avikṣvabhutesu imam yajamanam adhyuh* or Tell us history and create the interest of *Yajamana* in history The historical idea had its beginning in the *Rigveda*¹³⁶ *Puravṛtta* is called history History is a story and a narrative as well The *AV* presents an idealistic conception of history¹³⁷ In connection with the *Vratya* hymn, we learn that when the *Ekavratya* moved, he was followed by *Itihasa* (narrative) and the *Purana* (story of old) and the *gathas* (songs) and the *Naracansis* (eulogies) The *Ekavratya* is the abode of *Itihasa* and *Purana*

The importance of the study of history, at the time of *Brahmayajña* has been emphasised in the *ŚB* The *Chandogya upn* also lays stress on the study of history¹³⁹ It is called *Mangalyanitiḥ sapuranam* in one of the *Grhyasutra* (*AGS* 4.6) The study of history was considered to be very sacred and sometimes even important than the study of the *Mahabharata*¹⁴⁰ In his interpretation of the *Vratya* hymns, Griffith

136 *BD* - III 156 IV 46 इतिहास पुरावृत्तनृषिभिः परिकीर्त्यते ।

VI 107 109 VII 7 VI 153—आह्वानं प्रतिचाख्यानं इतरेतरयोरिदम् ।
सवादं मन्यते यास्व इतिहासं तु शौनके ।

137 *AV* - XI 7 24

ऋचं सामानिच्छं दासि पुराणं यजुषा सह
अच्छिष्टाज्जनिरे सवे दिविदेवा दिविश्रितः ।

138 *Ibid* XV 6 4

139 *Chandogya* - 7 1 2 ऋग्वेदं भगवोऽध्येमि यजुर्वेदं सामवेदं माथर्वणं
चतुर्थमितिहासं पुराणं पञ्चमं वेदानां वेदं पितृन् २ राशिं देवं निधिं वाक्योवाक्यं
मेवायं देवविद्यां वसुविद्यां भूतविद्यां क्षत्रविद्यां नक्षत्रविद्यां २ सप्तदेवयजनं
विद्याम् । एतद्भगवोऽध्येमि ।

140 *MBH* 18.6.95 अष्टादश पुराणानां श्रवणाद्यफलं भवेत्
तत्फलं समवाप्नोति वैष्णवो नात्र संशयः ।

Cf *Vanaparva* (187 57)— इत्येतं मानस्यकं नाम पुराणं परिकीर्तितम् ।

suggests that legendary and traditionary records (*Itihāsa-purāṇa*) were the fore-runners of the two great epics and the many *Purāṇas*. The *Gāthās* preserved the oral transmission among the people and the *Nāracaṅsis* contained the eulogistic legends of various heroes¹⁴¹. History preserved the cultural tradition of the people and the *Smṛti* writers have given due attention to this aspect of our knowledge¹⁴². The real history of our people and their culture is preserved in the *Purāṇas*¹⁴³. The *Sūtas*, *Māgadhas* and the *Chāranas* have compiled the *Purāṇas*. It is they who thereby preserved the historical tradition in bardic tales and forms. The *Purāṇas* were again recast during the hey-day of Gupta civilisation. The stories, preserved in the *Purāṇas*, formed the basis of future historical development and ultimately history came to be regarded as the fifth *Veda*. The *Sūta-Māgadhas* played an important part in compiling this great tradition. People used to take great interest in hearing the *Ākhyānas* at the time of *Aśvamedha* sacrifice¹⁴⁴. The association of the *Sūta-Māgadhas* with the development of historical idea is remarkable as they enable us to connect the *Vrātyas* with this tradition.

141. Griffith, *op. cit.* p. 101.

142. *Manu* - III. 232 - स्वाध्यायश्चाययेत् पित्र्ये धर्मशास्त्राणि चैव हि ।

आख्यानानीतिहासाश्च पुराणानि खिलानि च ॥

Thyā - II:- 189 - यतो वेदाः पुराणानि विधोपनिषदस्तथा ।

श्लोकाः सूत्राणि भाष्याणि यच्च विचन बाह्यनयम् ॥

ADS - 1. 19. 13, 18 - अथ पुराणे श्लोकयुदाहरन्ति - अथाप्युदाहरन्ति ।

Cf. ADS. 1. 29. 7, 2. 23. 3—

143. *Padmapurāṇa* - 3 5 10 - एष साधारण पन्थाः साक्षात्

कैवल्यसिद्धिदः *Bhāgavata* 7. 9. 10. holds that even a *Chāṇḍāla* can be greater than a *brāhmana*

144. *SB* 13. 4. 3. 3 - तस्य अनुष्या विशस्त इम आसत इत्यश्रोत्रिया गृहमेधिन उपसमेता भवन्ति तानुपदिश - त्वं चो वेदः सोऽयमित्यु चा सूक्त व्याश्रयण इवानुदवेत् वीणागणगिन उपसमेता भवन्ति तानध्वयुः सप्रैष्यन्ति वीणागणगिन इत्याह पुरा रिरिम यजमान राजाभिः साधु कृद्भिः संगायतेति न ते तथा संगायन्ति तपदेन नेवं संगायन्ति पुराणैरेवेनं सद्रात्रभिः साधुः कृद्भिः सलोकां कुर्वन्ति ।

IV

Social Organisation of the Vratyas

Closely connected with the Vrātyastoma is the social history of the Vrātyas. Their social life is depicted in a number of sources. A study of these sources reveals to us that the Vrātyas formed a well organised social unit. They had their leaders known as *Grhapatī* or patriarch. The Vrātyas were divided into classes and from a description of their dress, it appears that there were two classes—upper and lower. Lātyayana holds that the Vrātyas acknowledged three grades—(a) the educated, (b) the high born, and (c) the wealthy. He, who is superior in education, birth or wealth, should be acknowledged as their chief by the thirty Vratyas who should each have a separate fire for pouring the oblation into¹⁴⁵. While the Vrātya *Rājanjas* were highly cultured and intellectually developed, the rest were probably pushed into general ignorance and superstition possibly on account of poverty.

Almost all the sources are unanimous that the Vratyas practised neither agriculture nor trade. They were nomads in the beginning. Their movement is indicated in the *AV* which speaks of an *Antaradeśa* from which the Vrātya goes in all directions (east, west, south, north, upper and fixed regions). Vrātya seems to have been everywhere. Though confined to the east, they were in every direction. In the north, their expansion was checked by the Himālaya, in the south by the *Vindhya*, in the west by the pressure of other tribes, while in the east they had an unlimited scope for expansion. These regions seem to have been cleared off by the Vrātyas and their leaders who took initiative in the matter and placed themselves at the helm of social affairs claiming superiority over others. The *Antaradeśa* of the *AV* has been identified by some scholars with some portions of western India. The *antaradeśa* was “under the sway of the Brahmanical institutions with

emblem of royalty¹⁴⁹. The Vrātyas were most numerous in the east, though spread over in every direction. Some aspects of their social custom are also evident from the *PB*. They moved about in bands in open chariots of war, carried bows and lances, wore turban and garments with a red border and fluttering ends, wore shoes and sheep-skins folded double, possessed cattle. Their leaders were distinguished by brown robes and silver ornaments for the neck¹⁵⁰.

(11) *Usniṣa* (= *Turban*)—The purpose of the turban was to keep off the Sun. The term *Usniṣa* is not mentioned in the early Vedic literature except in connection with the Vrātyas in *AV*.¹⁵¹ The turban is the characteristic of the Vratya chieftain

149 S C Sarkar—*op cit* p. 52-54,

The conception of *Āsandi* was one of the most important aspects of the Vrātyas. Even after desertion the *Kuśīka* sect continued the tradition of *Āsandi* and it forms an aspect of the *Kaṇḍikā Upaniṣad* 1.5. The combined description of the throne and of the couch in the *Kaṇḍikā upn* (1.5) are very similar to the description of Vrātya's seat in *AV* — *XV*. 3.3-9 and also of Indra's throne *AB* 8.12. The *Kaṇḍikā upn* says — "He comes to the throne *śaśaśana* (far-shining)". The *Bṛhad* and *Rathantara Sāmāns* are its two forefeet, the *Śyānta* and the *Nauḍha*, the two hind feet, the *Vairāṣa* and the *Vairaj*, the two lengthwise pieces, the *Sakvara* and the *Ratva*, the two cross ones.

He comes to the couch *Amṛtaṅga* the *Udgītha* the bolster (*upasi*) prosperity, the pillow" (1.5), Cf *Der Vratya* — pp. 249-50. Hauer discusses it in connection with the *Mahāvratā* rite — "Die ang-zogenen Parallelen erweisen zweifellos, dass die *Āsandi* des Vrātya der *AV*-*XV* 3ff und die beim *Mahāvratā* gebrauchte identisch sind. Und wie der *Udgītar* als ein *Mahāvratā* als in König gepriesen wird und von mystischen Kräften begleitet ist, weil sein Sitz in jedem seiner Teile einer bestimmten überirdischen Macht mystisch entspricht, so der Vrātya in *AV* *XV*, " (p. 250)

150 *PB* — *XVII* 4.1-9, *AV* *XV* 1-4

151 S C Sarkar — *op cit* 68, *At* — *XV* 2-*रासोद्दृग्गाप*

Even in the *Jajurveda Samhitā* *Usnisa* is mentioned chiefly in connection with the Vratyas¹⁵² and the kings *Usnisa* in the *AV* was as bright and white as the day. Turban was a speciality of the Vratya culture. It became prominent in this country through their efforts. It was one of the important equipments of the Vratya *Grhapati*. It is enumerated as one of the properties or belongings of the Vratyas. According to Kātyāyana, the Vratya turban is obliquely wound round the head along with a long whip¹⁵³. The headdress, known as *Usnisa* is thus the earliest mentioned in connection with the eastern people. It used to have across windings and was tied with a tilt. The description closely resembles some of the turbans of Sanchi and Bharhut. It was considered to be a mark of dignity and authority¹⁵⁴.

(iii) *Skin dress* The primitive riparian clothing material was *Kuśa* a kind of grass. This is, no doubt, a relic of prehistoric times. The common ritual use of grass girdle today is a remnant of that old custom, which is said to have been invented first by the Angirāsas. The system was, in vogue, among the early indigenous people of the East like the Vratyas of Mṛgadha¹⁵⁵. Regarding the skindress, there is a difference of opinion about the actual skin used for the purpose. *ASS (A) (XXII 4 18)* gives the following description—"They

152 *PB XVI 6 13 1 14* वद्यमान्दुःशीपान्तेति प्रात्याना धनानि भवन्ति ।

153 *KSS - XXII 4 11* - त्रिविधस्तुतूप प्रते ।

154 Cf G S Ghurye - *Ind an Costumes* - p. 72. We have to bear in mind here that the oldest dress of the people of Bihar is *Dhoti* as will be evident from the Dārganj image. *Dipatta (Dhoti)* in Maltili is another oldest dress extant in Bihar.

Also Cf - Motichandra - *प्राचीन भारतीय वस्त्रमूला* - पृ. 23-24

Usnisa has been mentioned in connection with the dress of the kings and the Vratyas. Cf - *AB 6 1 SB 3 3 2 3 Der Irtva* pp. 124ff

155 Sarkar - *op. cit.* - p. 58



Didarg in image
(By Courtesy—Patna Museum)

wear the hairy skin of a black antelope together with black and white woollen blankets¹⁵⁶." This much is there about the *Gṛhapati* or Patriarch. The other *Vrātyas* also wear similar skins of antelopes as referred to above¹⁵⁷. According to the *PB*¹⁵⁸, they used goats' skin. MM. Śāstri holds that the *Vrātyas* had two pieces of sheep skin bordered with white embroidery; while there was no border with the others¹⁵⁹. None but the gods and *Brāhmanas* use skins, the only exception being the *Vrātya* chieftain and their followers. They had an improved style of wearing twofold (*Dvīsamhitāni*) *ajinas*, one black and one white (*Kuśa-valakṣa*) so as to form four-lined skin wraps¹⁶⁰. The Dravidian peculiarity in dress of the *Vrātyas*

156. अग्निने पार्श्वमहिते कृष्ण वलक्षे आविके ।

Cf. KSS (Kṛṣṇa edn.)— अग्निने पार्श्वमहिते कृष्ण वलक्षे

मेघयोश्मन्ती पार्श्वमस्तानुभिः स्यूतैः संरुद्धे

शुद्ध कृष्ण वर्णे ब्राह्मणेन भवति । (XXII. 4. 18.)

Cf. *Der Vrātya* — p. 127 — "Der Anzug des *Gṛhapati* ist eindrucksvoll und symbolhaft. Auf dem Haupte trägt er den Turban... .. Ein Schwärzliches Gewand mit schwarzen Fransen umhüllt seine Gestalt (*Kṛṣṇaśam Vāsaḥ*). (P. 128.) Rudra ein solches Gewand, das der ganzen Gestalt etwas feierlich Dusteres gale, während die schwarzen Fransen beim schreiten und Hantieren eine Note von schweleender majestas hinzufügten... .. Cf LSS — VIII. 6. 12; VIII. 6. 13-14; TMB — XVII. 1. 4; WZKM — XXV. 366; *Baudhāyana* — XVIII. 24; *Taitt. Sam.* II. 1, 2, 2; V. 6. 12, 1, AB. V. 14.

157. KSS — XXII. 4. 19-20 — एवमेवाजिनानीतरेषाम् ।

Note:— इतरेषा ब्राह्मणामेवाजिनानि भवन्ति ।

Cf Motichandra — op. cit. pp. 23-24.

158. *PB*, XVII. 1. 14.

159. *ML*, p. 9

160. Sarkar — op. cit — p. 57; Cf LSS — VIII. 5. 8; The *Vrātyas*, according to *Lātyāyana*, used *Uṣṇīṣa*, *Lohī'avāsas* (red cloth) and *urupota* (*Kurtā*). Śāṅḍilya holds that the clothes of the *Vrātyas* were not of black colour but of variegated colour (mixed —

is clearly perceptible. Their preferential emphasis on the braided or tusselled "Tūṣa" fringes may indicate that the Vratyas displayed the hanging ornamental fringe, by tucking only one corner of it¹⁶¹. The Vratyas other than the *Gṛhapati* used blankets having two protuberances, red or black threads for fringes, and clothes with red or black borders. The Vratyas generally wore clothes woven out of the blackish thread. These clothes were known by the name of *Kadru* or reddish brown. The *Kadru* may also indicate a cloth having black selvage¹⁶². The Vratyas preferred red headdress¹⁶³. They used garments with black fringes. They had upper garments with red borders and corded fringes with strings at each side¹⁶⁴. The Vratya *Gṛhapati* favoured dark blue clothes and borders¹⁶⁵. They also used some sort of silver ornaments.

(iv) *Nisko Rajatah*—Or Silver Ornament. The Vratyas used ornaments, made of silver, for neck or breast¹⁶⁶. The

चित्रकवरा) (VIII 6 12) Gautama holds that their clothes were generally white (*Suklam*) and borders black (*Kṛṣṇadāśan*) (VIII 6 13) Regarding the colour, all authorities are not unanimous on the point

161 KSS (k)— दामतूषाणि बलुकान्तानिदिचूडन्याविकानि वासायसि लोहितान्तानि कृष्णान्तानि वा तदारयानि ।

The different reading in the *Kas* edn is — आविकानि वासासि = मेघरामानि वस्त्राणि गृहपत्यतिरिक्ताना सर्वेषा व्रात्याना धनानि भवन्ति । कीदृशानि, दामतूषाणि । तूषो = वस्त्राणि । (XXII 4 20-21)

162 *Ibid* XXII 4 13-14— कृष्णसूत्रोत्त कद्रुच्यते— तदपि व्रात्यधनम्— स्वयम् कृष्ण सत यत्कृष्णदशवास तदावद्राख्यम्—अकृष्ण कृष्णदश वातदारयम् । Cf KSS (k) वास कृष्णदशकद्रु—*Note*— कृष्णमक्षित येन तत्करणे न कृष्णमभिरुच्यते । कृष्णसूत्रोमित्यर्थः । तत्कद्रुवाख्यम् ।

163 LSS—VIII 5 8, for other kinds—Mot chandra *op cit* pp 23 24, *Sūratīya* VIII 6 12, *Gautama* VIII 6 13

164 PB XVII 1 14-15

165, *Ibid*

166 KSS—XXII 4 17— निष्को राजत — *Kas edn* has—राजनो निष्क वण्डभरण व्रात्यधनम् ।

silver ornament was a speciality with the Vrātyas while the aryaṇs used ornaments made of gold. Since there is no mention of any other metal except the silver, with reference to the equipments of the Vrātyas, it may be presumed that they had not developed the art of manufacturing other metal goods or articles. The reference to *Suvarṇa*, in the *AV*, in connection with the Vrātyas, is too mystic to admit of any verification at this stage. The implications, arising out of the mention of *Suvarṇa* in the *AV*, have been discussed elsewhere in this volume. The Vrātyas probably used necklaces (*Kaṇṭhūbharana*) made of silver. R. R. Bhāgwat believes that the *Gṛhapati* of the Vrātyas wore an ornament called *Niṣka* or coin¹⁶⁷. The *PB*¹⁶⁸ also states that they used *Niṣka*, silver ornament, worn around the neck. This was one of the equipments of the Vrātyas¹⁶⁹.

167. Phāgwata - *op. cit.* P. 361.

168. *PB* - XVII. 1. 14; Cf. Dr. Motichandra, *op. cit.* pp. 23-24—
“निष्क नाम की माला”—

169. The word '*Niṣka*' has been used in the *Rigveda* (V. 19. 3),
- *AB* (VIII. 22), *AV* (V. 17. 4) and in the *BD* (III. 148-169)

BD-III. 148—निष्काया वृषमाणो च शतमदा पुनः ।
एतदुत्तरसुक्तं शमित्यादिनोदितम् ॥

III. 149—शतमथाञ्जन निष्कान्स्थान्दशवधूमाः ।

चतुर्थो गोवा चैव सहस्रं पृथुयाधिकम् ॥

—*Niṣka* here has been used in the sense necklets.

Cf. *Der Vrātya*—pp. 128-129—“Dabei nahm er einen *Niṣka* mit”
denn in alter Zeit wurde von Priestern, die eine Umfahrt
machten, ein dhana Umgehangt Zur Herausforderung der sich
Fürchtenden “.....So trägt auch Rudra den *Niṣka*, und
Zwar ist er dort deutlich für” heilig “erklärt : arhaṇ (bibharṣi)
(n'ṣkaṃ yaṇatam vi'varupam..... . Der unbekehrte Vrātya
Vrātya trägt nach Baudhayana XVIII, 24 Zwei Schmuckstücke,
eines aus Gold, das andere aus Silber, (*Suvarṇarajatau*
rukmau), auch in *AV* XV trägt der Vrātya Zwei Schmuck-
stücke (*kalmali-manā*), die mit Sonne und Mond Verglichen
werden, während der *Niṣka* der Vrātyastoma identisch ist.....”

(V) *Upānah* (Sandal)

The Vrātyas had a pair of shoes and a doubly joined goats hides¹⁷⁰. The Sūtrakāras are of opinion that the sandals of the Vrātyas were of variegated colours. Others hold the view that they were black shoes furnished with flaps¹⁷¹. Their sandals were not only black but also pointed. The term "*Upānah*" first occurs in the *Yajurveda Samhitā* and in the *Brāhmanas*, with which the Vrātyas are connected. S. C. Sarkar says — "these details indicate that the most stylist shoe-wearers of those days were the Vrātyas¹⁷²". The shape and colour of their sandals differed greatly from those of the Aryans. The Vrātyas used sandals of black skin with ears and two sheep skins¹⁷³. *Upānah* was also one of the equipments of the Vrātyas.

(VI) *Pratoda* (whip) and *Jyāhroḍa* (a small bow without an arrow)

The Vrātyas carried a whip in their hands and a small bow without arrow by which they made depredations and troubled the people¹⁷⁴. They beat those unworthy of correction. They used a kind of bow which was not meant for

170. PB XVII 1. 14-15.

171. KSS XXII. 4. 23—उपानहौचक्रणिन्यौ कृष्णेस्याता मित्वेक ।

Cf *Kāśī edn* — दे-दे दामनी उपानहौ च.....(दामिनी दे-दे-meaning not clear)

172. Sarkar-Op. C. Pp 69-70. The pointed shoes of variegated colours were, till recently, very popular among the aristocratic class of Bihar.

173. *ML-P* 9 Cf. Motichandra-Op Cit.

174. PB-XVII. 1. 14-16, *Pratoda* is mentioned only in the *Kāśī edn* of the KSS. XXII. 4. 11—प्रतोद. अनङ्कुप्रेरण साधन प्राचन = प्रतोद. । इदं द्वितीयं प्रात्यधनम् ।

shooting¹⁷⁵. The meaning of *Jyāhroḍa* is not clear even to the Sūtrakāras. According to Baudhāyana, the Vrātyas are provided with a bow and three arrows in a leathern quiver. The Vrātya chiefs are said to be armed with whip or a goad, two forerunners before and two footmen behind¹⁷⁶. *Pratoda* and *Jyāhroḍa* were the two important equipments of the Vrātyas. The possession of bow and arrow along with whip is indicative of the fact that the Vrātyas, in general, had not yet crossed the stage of hunting. The use of leather and skin for the protection of bows and for the purposes of dress enables us to arrive at the conclusion that they had not yet advanced much in their then technological development.¹⁷⁷

175. KSS (K) XXII. 4. 12-ज्याहोरोडेवोग्यं धनुस्तदाख्यम् । Cf-

13 of *Kāśīn*-वज्रसिधना समर्थधनुस्तदाख्यम् ज्याहोड शब्द वाच्य-
नित्यर्थः । इयं तृतीयं ब्राह्मणम् ।

176 P. T. S. Arjagar—*Op Cit.*—78.

177. Cf. MBH—XIII. 2786.

Hauer—'Der Vrātya' P. 131—

—“Dieser Stachelstock ist das Vorbild des Śivaitischen Sūla. So trägt der Asket, der Bhairava in einem von Menschenblut und Schnaps triefenden Schädel verehrt, eine solche Lanze. Und in der Beschreibung des Zuges der Śivaitischen Bakchanten bei Megasthenes tragen diese bei ihren Aufzügen und Tanzen einen Speer. Der Stachelstock des Rudra-Śiva selber entwickelte sich dann im Laufe der Zeit zu dem Trisūla, der bis heute sein wirkungskraftiges symbol geblieben ist”.

“..... Schon die Tatsache, das es Sāman gab, die den Namen Jyāhroḍa trugen, kann gar nicht erklärt werden, wenn wir den (P. 132) Jyāhroḍa nicht als magisches Instrument auffassen,... .. Der stab bei der weihe ist längst als Zauberwaffe erkannt, und der Tridanda des heiligen Bettlers ist ein Überbleibsel jener primitiven Zauberpraktiken. (*Lit*—VIII. 8, 6, 8—धनुष्केणानिपुण ब्राह्म्याः प्रसेधमानायन्ति)

P. 133—Ich habe aber oben erwiesen, dass das wirkliche objekt von Praseḍhamāna die unsicht baren bosen Mächte sind, und

(VII) *Vipatha* (Cart)

The Vratyas rode in carts with bamboo sticks without cover and drawn by horses and mules¹⁷⁸. The leader of the Vratyas owned a rough cart covered with planks, "a board-covered rough vehicle". It was also one of the important equipments of the Vratyas. According to the Sutrakaras, their chariot was covered with planks, called *Amargagāmīrathah*¹⁷⁹. The term refers to the rough carts of the Vratyas, often going out of the road. The carts were, actually, covered with loose planks and drawn by shaky mules. They did not move in any particular direction at any particular moment. Their wandering was of aimless nature, having, perhaps, no definite purpose. Lātyāyana calls the '*Vipatha*' '*Prachyūrtha*' meaning eastern chariot. The Vratyas tied the planks with their carts with string¹⁸⁰.

From the above discussion it is apparent that the Vratyas had a different social structure of their own and were diametrically opposed to the Aryan social system. They were considered fit to be sacrificed at the altar of God, '*Atikrusta*' (Loud Noise). They were not conversant with the Aryan method. They were

damit stimmt, dass auch t srdhanva Dämonenversche ewcler ist und ebenso danda bei der Weihe, m t dem der , Eogen 'des Vrātya in eins gesetzt w rd"

178 and 179 KSS-XXII. 4. 15 ढलवासीर्णोविपथ In the *Kāśī* *śāstra* we have—"वल्केरास्तार्ण आच्छादितो विपथ = अमार्गगामीरथ । सोऽपि प्रात्ययनम् । Cf *PD*-XVII. 1. 14.

KSS XXII. 4. 16—मथाथराभ्या वयमग्न्या युक्त स्वादित्येके ।

The rough carts associated with the eastern people, are indicative of the fact that the Vratyas were easterners having definite marked customs and social habits.

Cf *Āpastamba*-XVIII. 6. 5. *Sāṅkhya*-XIV, 72, 3, *LSS*-VIII, 6. 9,

180 *Der Vratya*-P. 139 ff

considered degenerate since they did not observe Brāhmanical rules and abide by the Aryan discipline. They did not practise agriculture and trade and coveted the food prepared for the Brāhmanas. Their words were poisonous. Their differences with the Aryans stand marked when we take into consideration the *Vrātyadhana* or their dress and equipment.

(1) The Aryans had chariots, the Vrātyas had carts. The Aryans had their planks nailed to the chariots, Vratyas' planks were tied with strings. The horses of the Aryans were trained and restrained while that of the Vrātyas detracted from the right path¹⁸¹. The Aryan horses had reins while the Vratyas had sticks with leather throng. Sticks, with leather throngs, are used even today by the bullock cart drivers and coachmen in Bihar. The animals of the Vratyas generally went out of the road as they were not controlled.

(ii) The Aryans tied their head dress round their heads, the Vrātyas did it in a slanting manner.

(iii) The Aryans had two garments (upper and lower), the Vrātyas had only one tied on their loins by two strings. The Aryans had no borders on their cloths, the Vratyas had black borders.

(iv) The Aryans had *Upānat* shoes, the Vrātyas had sandals with a crest.

(v) The Aryans had bow, bowstrings and arrows, the Vrātya had only the bow without string. Vrātyas' bow had certain characteristics — its concave side was red and its convex side blue, with the red side he covered his enemies and with the blue side he pierced his enemies¹⁸².

(vi) The Aryans had gold ornaments, while Vrātyas used silver.

181 The Vrātyas carts moved aimlessly

182 *AV-AN* 1 7, 8—। लमस्योदर लोहित पृष्ठम् ।

नीलेनैवाग्निं आतुष्य प्रोगीतिलोहितेन

द्रिपन्त विध्यतीति ब्रह्मवादिनोवदन्ति ॥

Some sort of classification existed in the Vrātya society. The articles, relating to their dress, were mainly used by the Vratya patriarchs. The common man among them had not the fortune of enjoying those privileges. The common man used cloth with red borders and with strings at other end. The Vrātyastoma ceremony had thousands of sacrificers. The wisest, the richest and the most powerful among them acted as *Grhapatī* or the Patriarch and the rest only followed him. The *Grhapatī* had to pay a higher *Dakṣinā* (or fees). This ceremony was of frequent occurrence. The Vrātyas, when purified, were not permitted to bring with them the *Vrātyadhana*. These things had to be given to the Magadhā Brahmanas¹⁸³. Having performed the sacrificial rites after the Vrātyastoma, the Vrātyas should desist from the Vratya way of life¹⁸⁴ and should give their belongings to those who have not abandoned Vrātya practices¹⁸⁵. Kauṣītaki and Dyautāna were the two important *Grhapatīs* of the Vrātya. They acquired sufficient eminence in their days. Kauṣītaki was allowed to collect the *Brāhmaṇas* of the *Rigveda*, while Dyautana is associated with the *Dyauta sāmān*. *Dyauta sāmān* is, in fact, the *Sāmān*, which is the central point of the Vrātyastoma ceremony. The new society, created by the fusion of this new blood, introduced domestic regulations, the social regulations, hygiene and sanitary regulations, embodied in the *Grhadharma* and *Āchāra* regulations of the Sūtra period¹⁸⁶.

183. सर्वेष्वव्रात्या मागधदक्ष निवाना य स ब्रह्मवन्धुभिर्जायत स मागधदेशीय ब्रह्मवन्धु तस्मै दद्यु । अपरे तु मागध गेयमाहु । तजयोदेशीय इषदसमाप्ती देशीय इत्युच्यते तस्मैदद्यु ॥

Note on the KSS (K) XXII 4 24

184. KSS (K) XXII 4 27—व्रात्यस्नोमेनेद्वा व्रात्यभाषादिस्मेतु ।

185. KSS (K) XXII 4 25—अविरतेभ्यो वा व्रात्यचरगार ।

Also of—XXII 4 26—एवेन मृजाना य (२) न्तीति श्रुते (PB-XXVII

1. 16)—of *Kāśī edn* तेषु व्रात्येषु पापिभ्येव पाप मृजाना शोभयन्ती यान्ति पूतना प्राप्नुवन्ति इति अवगार । of *Kāśī edn* text—

XXII 4 27-30.

186. Śāstrī-Vrātyas-p 8.

H P. Śaṣtri holds — "They (*Bhrgu-angirāṣas*) are like a miscellaneous lot and are the purified Vratyas who had no *gotra* but *prajāra* only¹⁸⁷." The Aryans claimed their descent from the *Saptarṣi* of the *Rigveda*¹⁸⁸ and *Agastya*. These eight are the roots of the *gotras*. *Bhrgu* and *Angirāṣa* have nothing to do with the *gotras*. They compiled the *AV* for their own interest and extolled *Ekavratya*. The marriage of the descendants of the *Rigvedic Rṣi* is guided by one set of rules while of the *Vrātyas* by the other. The *Vratyastoma* ceremony enabled the Aryans to bring about a social revolution which marked the mingling of the Aryans and the aboriginal customs. That system proved effective and helpful. The combination of these two elements led to better regulation of social, domestic and political organisation. The magic formulae and the *mantra* rituals of the primitive *Vrātyas* were discarded and replaced slowly by a new socio-religious foundations respecting the views of both. It is in this way that magic gave way to religion and the unsophisticated and simple ways of the primitive *Vratyas* were turned into an organised social system, dominated by the *Brahmanas*. Manuals for the changed situation were prepared, wherein the old Aryan beliefs were replaced in most cases by the aboriginal ideas.

Dealing with the "*Origin of the Brāhmaṇa gotras*"¹⁸⁹, Prof. Kōśambi holds that the *Vrātyas* were first differentiated from the rest long after the *Bhrgu-Jamḍagni* group was well-established and the *Vedas* fully developed. The *Vrātya* tribe did not need the *Vedas* simply because they continued to wander eastward, into a territory without a great civilisation comparable with that of the Indus Valley. The *Vrātya* priesthood was much less developed than the *Vedic Aryans*. The *Vratyas* had their own tribal organisation outside the *Brahmin*

187. *Ibid*-p 8

188. *Jamḍagni*, *Bhṛdṛāja*, *Viśvāmitra*, *Atri*, *Gautama*, *Kāśyapa*, *Vasiṣṭha*, and *Agastya*

189. *JBBRAS* XXVI (1950) p 42

ritual. Patañjali¹⁹⁰ is quite clear on this point. We have seen above that the *Sūtras* are concerned only with reconciling Vrātya observances with Vedic rituals. Needless to point out that the *Sūtras* say not even a word about the actual life of the Vrātya tribes¹⁹¹. The Vrātya *Gṛhapati* was the tribal chief, having both social and religious functions. There is little doubt about the fact that the wandering Vrātyas alone preserved the older tribal institutions down into historical times¹⁹².

After their conversion, the Vratyas seem to have been influenced by the Brahmanical or Aryan customs and thought. Their whole conception of life considerably changed. We find that in later literature, they were divided into *Brahmana*, *Kshatriya* and *Vaisya*. The descendants of the Vrātyas continued to be Vrātyas for generations¹⁹³. They were considered to be of mixed origin¹⁹⁴. There were *avrātjabrahmāna*, *avrātjakshatriya* and so on¹⁹⁵. The offsprings of *Vrātjāvaiśya* were deprived of the *Upanayana Śamsakāra*¹⁹⁶. They are said to have acted as spies and sorcerers at some places. Karusa, a country between Kośala and Videha, was the centre of a branch of the Vratya Vaisyas, viz, *Karusas*.

190. Patañjali on Pāṇini-V 2 21

191. Cf. *Der Vrātya*, We learn from the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* that the basic rules of the Buddhist *Samgha* were derived from the aryan tribal constitutions, specially of the Licchavis called *Vrātyakṣatriya* by Manu (X 21)

192. *JBBRAS*-XXVI, 49

193. 155-49-व्रात्यस्य पुत्रो ब्राह्म्यो भवति कालानि क्रमे सर्वस्मृतिग्राहि कालानि क्रमं पुच्छं यैव ब्राह्म्यनिर्देशात् । . . . (मात्यताशुद्धिसंग्रह)

Here provisions have been made for the purification of the Vrātyas even after twelve generations. There is a lengthy process of penance for twelve years.

194. *Vrātyaśāstraśāhitaṇḍīkā*-p 19

195. *Ibid*-20.

196. *Ibid*-21-त्रान्यवैश्योत्पन्नस्यनोपनयनं सस्वार इति जैमिनी सम्मतम् ।

Among the three grades of the Vrātyas,¹⁹⁷ discussed earlier, (LSS — VIII 6), the wealthiest lived in luxury. The Vrātya *Grhapati* also led a luxurious life at the cost of the common people. The Vrātya took to agriculture possibly after conversion. The *Grhapati*, on account of his privileged position, lived peacefully in a luxurious manner as all other Vrātyas compensated his needs. Only educated, high born and wealthy person was acknowledged as chief or *Grhapati*. He seems to have been a very powerful man in the Vrātya society. Others in the Vrātya society, except the *Rājanya*, were ignorant and superstitious. Why, after all, the *AV* glorified the Vrātya? The problem is still there and the only plausible explanation, that seems logical, is that the Vrātyas must have wielded sufficient power at a particular period of history. The Vrātya is never mentioned otherwise than as being pursued by the *Magadhas* and the *Pumśchali* (harlot). Here we have to bear in mind that *Pumśchali* could not have been an Aryan institution since they (the aryaans) were an example to others in matters of sexual propriety. *Māgadhas* and *Pumśchali* were the companions of the Vrātyas. The *MBH* (*Karnaparva* 38.18) regards Magadha as a territory of many harlots. The *Sūta* king of Anga, Karna, offers Śyāmā Māgadhi, a slave girl as reward for services. *Pumśchali*, as such, cannot be definitely an early Vedic institution. It was a Vrātya institution¹⁹⁸.

197 (a) The educated

(b) The high born and

(c) The wealthy

198 For details — Cf — *Die Begleiter der Vrātya* in *Der Vrātya* pp 142 ff

cf *AV*—XV 2, *Bauḥyana* XVIII. 25, LSS—VIII, 6, 28, KSS. XXII 4, 22, *Manu* X 11, 26, *Gautama*—IV. 17, *BDS*—I, 2, 13, VI—II 116, *SA*—46 (24) *Hal'yadha* II 280., *VS* XXX. 5, *TMB*—III, 4, 1, 1.

cf—*Der Vrātya*—p. 114—'Eine Zu brahmabandhu analoge Bildung haben wir in rśjanvabandhu, und dieser ist in Vedischer

R. N. Dandekar believes that the Vedas are not exclusively the documents of the Vedic Aryan life and thought and

Zeit durchaus nicht nur ein Verachteter Rājanya, sonder hochangesehen, wie Z. B. der berühmte König Janaka Von Videha und andere. Wenn auch nicht unbedingt anerkannt Von denorthodoxen, Und SB (X, 5, 2, 10) werden die Rājanyabandhu ganz allgemein im Sinne Von bestimmten Adeligen gebraucht, Ja SB (1, 1, 4, 2) steht der Ausdruck einfach für Ksatriya (VI II, 217) "

Ibid—p 146—"Wenn nun Sowohl der Māgadha wie die Pumschalū als Begleiter des Vrātya das Beiwort brahmabandhu bekommen, so ist damit erwiesen, dass auch sie dem nicht-Orthodoxen Brahmanenstand angehörten, also Personen "heiligen"charakters waren, und die brahmabandhu Kumārī) die wie die brahmācārī gewisse magische Zeremonien wirksam Vollzieht, ist eine Parallele Zu brahmabandhu apumschalū Pumschalū Vākya, die bei der Vrātya Feier des Mahāvratā Zusammen mit dem Māgadha den rituellen Beischlaf Vollzieht (मगधदेशोत्पन्नो ब्रह्मवादाऽऽत्मा) Es wird nun wohl kein Zweifel darüber bestehen, dass Māgadha in AV XV, 2 und brahmabandhu — amāgadha Māgadha — Vākya in Eudh XVIII, 26 identisch sind, sie sind Begleiter des Vrātya, in irgend einem Sinne der Vrātya-Schar angegliedert." Die Erklärung scheint mir auf der Hand zu liegen. Es gab im Magadha-Lande Brahmabandhu, Ketzerische Brahmanen, deren religiöse Bräuche mit denen der Vrātya eng Verwandt waren, so dass sie da, wo es keine eigentlichen (P. 147) Vrātya gab, an deren Stelle treten konnten."

P. 148-49—"Zusammenfassend können wir also feststellen, dass die Vrātya Von Personen begleitet waren, die seit uralter heiligen charakter trugen und die ihre Zeremonien mit Gesang, Musik und Tanz belebten. Sie waren auch die Hauptfiguren bei den Festen Von orgiastischem Treiben in Gemeinschaft mit den übernatürlichen Mächten, das im heiligen Beischlaf seinen rituellen Niederschlag gefunden hatte. Die Bezeichnung amā-

that a considerable portion of them is the result of culture contacts and racial fusions. In this connection, we have to take into account the problems of the impact, on the Aryans, of the *Dāsas*, the *Vrātyas*, the *Sūdras* and various other non-Aryan communities and the consequent inter racial and intra-racial conflicts and reactions in ancient India¹⁹⁹. In this connection, the findings of Buddhaprakāśa also deserve mention²⁰⁰. He says — “*Vrātya* is described as a Vedic priest and the *Vrtra* as the chief repository of the *Rks*, *yajus* and *Saman*, which he imparted to Indra, in the *Śathapatha Brāhmaṇa*. *Vrātya* is described as belonging to an aristocratic class that wallowed in wealth and wine, *Vrtra* as owning towns and fortresses and enjoying tubfuls of soma juice. *Vrātya* is described as a despicable being offered as a victim in a *Puruśamedha* sacrifice (VS XXX 8), *Vrtra* is inimical to Indra, whose duty it was to kill him. These points of resemblance show the identity of *Vrātya* and *Vrtra*, both of which were synonymous designations of the priestly class, among the non-Aryan peoples of India, who first checked the advance of the Aryans and fought with them and later on converted them to religious order. This class came to be known as Brahmanas in later times”. One may not agree with the learned scholar, but the suggestions, put forward by him, are worth considering. There is a view that the institution of Brahmanism is earlier than the Aryan and its traces are found not only in India but in other parts of the ancient world.

gadha, apumscālū bei Baudh. beweist, dass weder das Wort *Māgadha* in seiner wörtlichen Bedeutung als geographische Bezeichnung noch pumscālū in seinem gemeinen Sinn Verstanden werden durfte, mājgadha bezeichnete den im heiligen Dienste wandernden Sänger und Musiker überhaupt, pumscālū die später devadāsī.”

199. *PIHG* (1947)—Bombay—Presidential speech of Dr. R. N. Dandekar p. 27.

200. *ABORI* XXX 197, cf. *Dīghaṅkāya* (PTS) I 89 about Buddha's description of the Brāhmaṇa.

V

Political Organisation of the Vrātyas

A study of the social organisation of the Vrātyas enables us to understand clearly the nature of their political system. They were backward in their political organisation than the *Pugas*. They were subordinate to a leader, distinguished by his *niska* (or silver ornament). Their leader seems to have been called a *Grāmanī* ²⁰¹. Among some of the remarkable social habits of the Vrātyas, violence was prominent and there were some juvenile groups, who actually indulged in these things. In order to put a stop to these undesirable elements, it was natural to have some sort of political organisation to keep them in check. Pāṇini also refers to the existence of such juvenile groups among the Vrātyas ²⁰². There was some sort of similarity in the political texture of the *Vrātyas* and the *Pugas*. The Vrātyas had some form of crude *Samgha* organisation ²⁰³.

The term 'Āsandī', in the *AV* (*XV* . 3), has been used in connection with the inauguration of the Vrātya. *Āsandī* is taken as the origin of royalty and the origin of royalty in the *AV* is ascribed to this idealised event ²⁰⁴. This emblem of royalty was known to the *Angirāsas*. Sarkar says — "The emphasis of the *AV* about the Vrātya origin of kingship and priesthood, and the great political power and prestige of the Vrātya finds complete support from the *Purāṇic* tradition regarding them and seems to be only a priestly and mystic version of accepted and known facts of the tradition the Vrātyas corresponding to the non - Ailas. The Vrātya hymn can be explained by this reasonable hypothesis" ²⁰⁵.

The *AV* (*XV* 3) gives an indication of the existence of some sort of political organisation. The following points

201 V. S. Agrawal-Op Cit-440

202 Pāṇini-VI 2 28

203 Agrawal-Op Cit-442.

204-205 Sarkar-Op. Cit p 63

will make it more clear — "The good people were his (Vrātya's) footmen, Samkalpa (resolve) the messenger and others were waiters (upsād). The great Vrātya became impassioned (rāj) and thence was born the noble (Rājanya) (AV. XV. 81)." Rājanya is the oldest designation of a kṣatriya or a man of military or royal class. At creation, Rājanya is said to have been the arms of the sacrificed Purusa (AV—XIV. 6; Cf. Rigveda X. 90; Puruṣasūkta) or Primal man who is identified with the universe. He is said to have been generated by Prajāpati (TS—VII. 1.1; SB. II. 1.4). Yajurvetā is said to be the womb from which he was born (TB—III. 129). The word 'Rājanya' which comes from the root 'Rāj (to rule) is here fancifully connected with the root 'Raj (sorajyata) i.e. he was filled with passion. A passage in the Jain Sūtra discusses three classes of rulers of which Rājanya is one²⁰⁶. The old republican legend was "Vṛṣṇi—rajāṇya—ganaśa—trātaśa" (of the Vṛṣṇi—rājanya and Gana, the protector of the country). From the coins of about 200 B.C., it appears that the epithet "Rājanya Janapadaśa" was very common among the republics²⁰⁷.

On the authority of Pāṇini, Patañjali, Kātyāyana and also the MBH, Jayaswal believes that Rājanya was the name of a political people and that the Rājanyas were, therefore, a democracy²⁰⁸. Andhaka and Vṛṣṇi Rājanyas were elected rulers. The Rājanya sometimes indicated president as we learn from some of the coins of the Rājanya constitutions²⁰⁹.

206 *Ayazmasuttam* (Edited by Jacobi) II 1. 2 2.—उगमकुलीनि वा मोनकुलीनि वा राइय कुलीनि (Rajanya) वा सति। कुलीनि वा इवयातु कुलीनि

207 Cunningham—Coins of Ancient India—p 60. Rājanya was also well-known equivalent for the Kṣatriyas—cf V. A. Smith—Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Vol I p 164.

208 K. P. Jayaswal—Hindu Polity—p 157 They used bronze cast coins cf Pāṇini—V 1 26

209 Cunningham—Op Cit 60

With the Vrātyas, it seems, kingship remained a tribal office of small importance even when the tribe developed into an oligarchy over a tributary population²¹⁰. The great Vrātya tribe was that of the *Licchavis*, mentioned with respect by the *Jainas* and the earliest *Buddhists*, who maintained a high social position down to the Gupta period. While the Māgadha Brāhmanas are called *Brāhmadandhus*, we have to remember that the kings in the *Purāṇas* are referred to as *Kṣhatrabandhu*, applied to Bimbisāra and Ajatashatru²¹¹. Śāstri identifies *Kṣhatrabandhu* with the Vrātyas²¹².

The Vrātyas of Magadha, possibly after conversion, developed their trade and national wealth along with their own institutions both civil and military. The *Śākjas*, *Mallas*, *Licchavis*, *Videhas*, *Angas*, *Kāśi*, *Bārhadarathas*²¹³ and the *Haryanka* dynasties developed their own forms of government. They were mostly converted into *kshatriyas* after giving up their nomadic habits. The *Licchavis'* *Vrijjis*, *Mallas*, *Kurus*, *Madras*, *Kukuras* and the *Panchūlas* had the title of *Rājā* signifying democratic president. *Raja* is also explained as a royal officer engaged in the work of government²¹⁴. The Vrātyas were called *Rājās* and when they were admitted into the Brāhmanical fold, the *Brāhmanas*, either out of self interest or political motives, called them *Rajanjas*. With the advent of the *Kṣhatrabāndhas* or the Vrātyas into the political arena of northern India (or Magadha), there took place a revolutionary

210. *JBBRAS*-XXVI 49

211. E. E. Parquer—*The Purāṇa text of the Dynasties of the Kshatriyas*—p. 22.

212. *AIL*-18.

Vrātya Sūddhisanigraha—p. 43. It also refers to *Pradyotas* and *Sivastikas* etc.

213. केचन पुनरत्रैवलिख्य मातृदा भवेयुरात्रानि वन्देन्ते बहुशो मातृदा आरौ परिमितामप्ये न मन्त्रमिषा एवमत्र सर्वथा मातृदातीन नाम भाव एव वक्ष्येत् । also cf p. 45.

214. Cf.—an explanation in the *Sabaraśāstra*.

change in the political set up of the country. While attempts were being made to stabilise monarchy on one side there were already existing oligarchical republics of the *Sākṣas*, *Mallas*, *Videhas*, *Vrjjis*, *Lichchavis* and others on the north bank of the Ganges¹⁵. The establishment of monarchy by the *Kshatrabāndhas* in Magadha proved to be a bedrock of the later imperialistic movement in India which ultimately succeeded in wiping out all traces of democratic government. While in the beginning, there existed spirit of co-existence and co-operation between these two systems (monarchy and republic), in the long run, the republican government had to give way to monarchical whims of the imperialists and by the time of the Gupta period, all remnants of republican system withered away.

*Viś*¹⁶ was an important political term in the Vedic period. The people or the tribe were called *Viśah*¹⁷. *Viś* refers to the people whose agreed concordant with the electors is necessary in king's election¹⁸. The *Brāhmaṇa* is mighty through the strength of the whole people¹⁹ (*Viś*). *Priyapāti*, being moved to action, moved out towards the western quarter and after him moved out *Vairupa* and *Vairaja*. *Vairaja* is an important technical term meaning kingless constitution. *Vairaja* has been described as national constitution of some

215 Kauṭilya's '*Arthasāstra*' calls these confederate people "*Samgha-
lettam*'

216 *AV* XV 8 2, XV 9 1, *Viś* is called commonalty in *Brh
up* 1 4 12, 15, In the *VS*, X 10-12 *Viś* is considered to be
'people', *AB* 2 33, *SB*-2 1 3 5-8, 2 1 4 12, 10 4 1
9, 11 2 7 14-6 *Viś* is identified with people

217 *AV*-III 4 2-चा विशोवृणता राज्याय, Cf *RV*-X 173 1, VI 87
1, 88 3 Cf *VI*-'*Viś*'

218 *AV*-III 4 6

219 *SB* V 4 4 14

220 *AV*-XV 2 3-त वैरप च वैराज Cf Griffiths *Op Cit* p 187.

of the nations of the north by the side of the Himalayas²²¹ If we take into account the description of the *AV*, it seems plausible to suggest that the *Vairajya* kingdom existed in the west of the Vratya territory. Even Kautilya, who has nothing but contempt for this type of government, treats it as a form of government. He rejects it as a bad form because he held democracy in contempt²²²

The Jain sources call this system *Verajan*.²²³ A reference to this form of government is found in the *MBH*, where *Viraj* is noticed as one of the titles of the ruler.²²⁴ *Virāj* is also mentioned in connection with the movement of the Vratyas²²⁵. The Jain sources mention this form as a living institution. One remarkable point in this connection, is that such states are unsafe for a monk or nun to go to as they are prone to suspect ascetics as political spies. Kautilya confirms when he says that the spies generally took the garb of sectarian ascetics. The *Vairajya* seems to denote the democratic concept, wherein the whole country was supposed to rule after a particular ceremony was held for the purpose²²⁶. The oath was administered to rulers of all forms of polity and was common to all constitutions²²⁷. The oath had a great constitutional importance and it was humanly solemn. The ritual was

221 AB VIII 14—वैराज्याय उदाच्यादिशि ये केच परेण हिमवत ननपन्ता
उत्तर कुरु न उत्तर मद्रा इति ।

Cf *Tajurveda*-\V II for a reference to *Vairajya* in south
India

222 *Arthashastra*-VIII 2

223 *Āyāramgarutta*-p 83

224 *Sāntiparva* L\VIII 54—राजा भोजो विराज समा

225 *AV*-XV 14 5

226 Probably *Vairajya* was post-tribal form of government with
some philosophical background

227 AB-VIII 15—साम्राज्य भौज्य स्वाराज्य वैराज्य पारमेष्ठ्य
समत्पर्यायी सार्वभौम —

practically the same for the republican and non monarchical constitutions

The whole administrative structure of the Vedic period is outlined in the *AV*. We learn that the *Samiti* and the *Sabha* were the two daughters of Prajāpati²²⁸. These two bodies are specifically mentioned in the *Vratyakūṇḍa* of the *AV*²²⁹. Lanman has translated the *Sabhā* as assembly, the *Samiti* as a gathering and the *Senā* as army

(1) *Sabha*—The *Sabha* was an important body of immense constitutional importance. It is called *Varista* which is explained by Sayana as a resolution of "many". It was as important as the *Samiti* and its decision was, in all cases binding. Pārasakara defines *Sabha* as a "body of men shining together"²³⁰. It was an important institution during the Rigvedic period. The *Prithi Sūkta*²³¹ of the *AV* indicates that the *Sabhā* was an independent body.

(2) *Samiti*—*Samiti* means meeting together. The most important function of the *Samiti* was to elect the *Rājan*²³². The people made such speeches as were agreeable to the assembled *Samiti*²³³. There is prayer for a common *Samiti*²³⁴. The *Samitis* of the whole land are referred to in the *AV*.

Both these bodies were the popular institutions of the Vedic period besides *Vidatha* and *Senā*²³⁵. *Vidatha*, it seems, was the parent institution because it was associated with civil,

228 *AV* VII 13 — सभा च समितिः श्रवता प्रजापतेर्दहितो सविधो

229 त सभा च समितिश्च सेना च, cf R. K. Choudhary's article in the *PIHC* (Bombay-1947)

230 *PGS*-III 13 1 some sort of judicial function of the *Sabha* is indicated here — Cf धर्मनिरूपणात् ।

231 *AV*-XII 1 56—ये ग्रामा यदरण्यं या सभा अधिभूम्याम् ।
ये सग्रामा समितयस्तेषु चाहवदेमने ।

232 *Ibid* V 19 15

233 *Ibid*-XXII 1 56

234 *Ibid*-VI 64 — Cf *RI* X 191 3

235 Dr R. S. Sharma's article in *JBRIS* & *PIHC*. Also cf R. S. Sharma—*Aspects of Political ideas and Institutions*

military and religious functions in the early Vedic period²³⁶. We learn from the *AV*, that the "*Senā*" was an important constitutional institution. A vague idea, about the conception of punishment, can be got from the mystic hymns of the *AV*. Fraud, if detected, was a punishable offence²³⁷.

If the asura sources under *Bhrgu* be ascribed to the authorship of the *AV*, some difficulties, regarding the political organisation of the *Vrātyas*, stand the chance of being solved without difficulty. The *Vrātyastoma* hymns of the *PB* (XVII 1 9) hint at the possibility of the asura element being a part of the *Vrātyas*. If the *Atharvan* stands for a priestly function, there might be conceivably others following the same cult. *Bhrgus* were the foremost among the *Atharvans*. *Kshatṛveda* and *Brahmaveda* strengthen this hypothesis²³⁸. We know that the *Kshatriya* prince of the *MBH* defied sovereignty and canonized the *Atharvaveda*. Dr. Banerjee Śāstri believes that "princes had followed earlier asura theories on statecraft²³⁹". The King's *purohita* was expected to know at least the *AV* or the *Brahmaveda*²⁴⁰. It is said that the *Vrātya* "went away to the people, Meeting, Assembly, Army and wine followed him. So let the King, to whose house the *Vrātya* who possesses this knowledge, comes as a guest, honour him as superior to himself". The *Vrātya* was considered superior to a king and when the number of his followers increased, he formed an assembly. *Senā* may be explained as a concomitant development of the growing

236 *RV*-III 38 5

237 *AV*-XV, 13 6 7, Cf. Griffith—*Op Cit* P 195—"Punish him quietly by letting him feel that his fraud is detected".

Cf. the *Text*—अथ यस्यान्नात्यो मात्यन्वो (Bogus *Vrātya*) नाम विभ्रत्य तिथिर्गृहानागच्छेत् । उपदेन न चैन वपेत् ।

238 *ADS*-II 11, 29, 10 11—"The knowledge of women and *Śūdra* is a supplement of the *Atharva*" We should bear in mind here that witchery is an aspiration in the *AV*.

239 Banerjee Śāstri—*Op Cit* P 61

240 *Ibid*-P 63—refers to the racial amalgamation

Vrātya organisation. The development of the Vrātya organisation necessitated the formation of an army.

The elevated position of the Vrātyas enabled their *Gṛhapati* to roll in wealth and luxury. Unlimited luxury brought in its train wine (prepared out of the rice beer as Griffith believes and even prevalent to-day in Chotanagpur area of Bihar) and its necessary accompaniment, the harlot.²⁴¹ *Puniścālī* was a companion of the Vrātya. All these go to prove that the Vrātyas were not savages but civilised people. The *AV* regarded the institutions of the *Sabhā* and the *Samiti* as originally derived from the Vrātya. The Magadhan kingship is also ascribed by some to have originated from the Vrātya source²⁴².

241. Buddha's description about the *Brāhmaṇas* in the *Ambaṭṭhaṇṇa* very well fits in with the Vrātya culture—"Brāhmaṇas parade about well-groomed, perfumed, trimmed as to their hair and beard, adorned with garlands and gems, clad in white garments, in full possession and enjoyment of the five pleasures of sense... live, as their food, on boiled rice of the best sorts, from which all the black specks had been sought out and removed, and flavoured with sauces and curries of various kinds...waited upon by women with fringes and fur round their loins...go about driving chariots drawn by mares with plaited manes and tails using along wands...have themselves guarded in fortified towns, with moats dug out round them and cross bars let down before the gates, by men girt with long swords,"—Cf. Dr. S.K. Chatterjee—*Origin and Development of Bengali Language*—Vol. 1, pp. 43-56.

Cf. Sammaddar—*Op. Cit.* pp. 10-11; Sarkar—*Op. Cit.* p. 208.

Cf. *Dīghaṇṇya* I, 88—Brāhmaṇas are described by Buddha as knowing mystic verse by heart, one who had mastered the Vedasand the legends as a fifth, learned in the *Itihāsa* and grammars, versed in the *Loṇḍha*'s aphorism, and in the theory of the signs on the body of a great man".

242. Sarkar—*Op. Cit.* p. 9. The Vrātyas were to have been royal states and led a very prosperous and affluent life.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

After a close study of the Vrātyas and their institutions, we may attempt to find out an answer as to their identity. The problem of the Vrātyas is yet an enigma of ancient Indian history and defies all possible explanation. The views on the subject are so confusing, contradictory and over-lapping that one finds it difficult to explain, with clarity of vision, the mystery surrounding the problem of the Vrātyas. In the absence of any definite conclusion on the point, scholars in different parts of the world have flown high in their own ivory towers of imagination with regard to the real meaning and significance of the term "*Vratya*". It is easy to conjecture and more easy to philosophise a thing or an object having mysterious surrounding. A seeker after truth has to tread thorny paths without any hope of reaching the ultimate goal. That is the case with scholars who are busy with the study of the problem of the Vrātyas. We cannot be sure even at this stage if the present study has succeeded in solving all the problems relating to the Vrātyas. Like various other previous attempts, made earlier, the present study aims to suggest a view-point on the subject with the hope that the future researches might throw some more illuminating light on this thorny problem of our ancient history.

It is an admitted fact that there lived, in the days of yore, peoples of different races and nationalities, in this country, having varied customs. They lived and mixed with each other and there was much of fusion between the foreigners and the natives. Assimilation, if nothing else, is the keystone of Indian culture and this process seems to have worked well even with regard to the absorption of the Vrātyas. Even before the *AV*, we find indirect reference to the Vrātyas representing hordes

of people and leading a nomadic life. The *AV* deified Eka-vrātya and he holds the same position in the *AV* as Indra in the *Rigveda*. Evidences are there to support the view that the Vrātyas were a people having customs different from the Aryans in many respects. If we assume that they were not a people, why, then, was the leader of the Vrātyas glorified in the *Atharvaveda*? What was the necessity of prescribing certain rites and formulæ for their conversion? What forced Manu and other writers of repute to take care to mention their categories and class them with the fallen? These are some of the questions which arise spontaneously when one cares a little to go through the ancient texts for a study of social and cultural history of India. Keeping in view these problems, we shall discuss below, in short, the history of various aryan and other tribes of ancient India and try to see if the Vrātyas were one of them.

The proto-aryans ancestors of the Rigvedic Indians, we are told, started their cultural career in the northern grasslands of Eurasia as pure-bred pastoral nomads with no settled home.¹ When and how agriculture and cattle-breeding came to be practised, we do not know exactly. It is yet an unsolved problem of anthropology. *Pūṣan* was conceived as the pastoral people's deity. He is described as a multiplier of cattle². His car is drawn by goats³. He has been conceived as a peculiar deity in the *RV*. He is regarded as the guardian deity of flocks and herds. *Pūṣā* and *Soma*, taken together, are regarded as generators. These two deities are invoked by the nomads because *Soma* supplied drink and *Pūṣā* meat and milk. Perhaps the nomads were the people who did not like to settle and live like the settled aryaans. It appears that the *Vrātas* or

1. N. N. Ghose—*The Aryan trail in Irān & India*. P. 35.

2. *RV*. VI. 37; Cf. *BD*. I. 82, 118; II. 2, 4, 10, 62; III. 95, 96 (B); V. 148. *Pūṣā* is mentioned with *Radra* (*BD*-II. 4). *Pūṣā* causes the earth to thrive (*BD*-II. 62).

3. *RV*-V. 53. 8; 58. 2; 55. 3.

hordes of people in the R̥gvedic age, leading nomadic life, patronised *Pṛsū* as their deity.

The '*Pañcajanāh*'^{3(a)} of the *RV* also deserve mention here. They are the '*Purus*', '*Yadus*', '*Turvaśus*', '*Anus*' and '*Drūhyus*'. According to Yāska⁴, they mean—"Gandharvas, manes, gods, demons and other monsters". Some scholars hold that they included the four *Varnas* and *Niśādas*, who constituted the fifth according to Upamanyu. Yāska defines them as "*Pañca-manusya-Jātāni*" *Śākṛtāyana*, as attributed by the author of the *Bṛhaddevatā*, explains them as the four *Varnas* with *Niśāda* as the fifth. There is no doubt that they were five different peoples, having definite traits of culture. Seceders among them proceeded to the east and with their eastward shift the old names were augmented by entirely new names, perhaps ethnic, but more commonly political⁵. The *Dasyus* undermined the portion of the *Tratsus*, Sudasa's original subjects, who were the first to depart. All these races marched forward and settled at various centres in the Gangetic valley. It was beyond this area of *Madhyadeśa* that there extended a vast outer circle of all the *Vrātyas*. The aryaans had to leave their homes in the west to drift into the homeless state in the east. Oldenberg believes that Magadha was the abode of early aryaanimmigrants, i. e., they were pioneers in advance of the general body of the aryaans and as such were looked down upon by their bretheren⁷.

3(a) Cf *BD-VII*, 66, 69—

—VIII. 69—यास्कौपमन्यवावेतान् आह तु पञ्चवै जनान् ।

निषादपञ्चमान् वर्णान् मन्यते शाकटायन ॥

—These are taken to be five races. In *Nirukta* (iii-8) Yāska does not give his own opinion.

4. Yāska—*Nirukta*—III 8.

5. Yāska—X 3 5 7

6. *JDL*—IV. p 13

7. *Buddha*—P. 10

The *Vrātyastoma* hymn of the *PB* definitely refers to the consciousness of having sprung from different races. The idea seems to have been alive till then. They were not the *Dasas* and differed greatly from the *Tṛtsu Bharatas* in not being Brahmanical in culture. Another commentator points out that the *Vratyas* were the earlier aryaans who had advanced up to Magadha and were so called because they lived up to their old ideals as opposed to the new aryan faith⁸. If the derivation of *Vratya* from the *Vrāta* (=horde) is correct, we can just surmise the following. *Vrāta* has been used in the sense of troops⁹ or hordes of nomadic tribes. In the *Yajurveda Samhita*, *Rudra* is called *Vratapati* and *Ganapati*¹⁰. Though *Vratya*

8 Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana—*Darsana-Digdarśana*

9 Cf *RV*-I 163 8 III 26 2, V 53 11—the troops of the *Marutas* are referred to by three different terms *Śardha Vrāta* and *Gana*, IX 14 2—an allusion to five tribes, X 34 8 12, X 57 5 (*Jīva Vrāta*, *AV*-II 9 2 TS 1 8 10 2, VS 16 25, *PB* VI 9 24, XVII 1 5 1²,

Vrāta is also taken to mean 'holy works' and if derived from that we may take *Vratyas* to represent a horde of religious people

—Also Cf *IS*-XXIX 46—*त्रातान् शुक्रमूहान् सदते अभिमवति ते त्रातसाह* Cf R. C. Mazumdar—*Corporate Life in Ancient India* p. 222 ff

Der Vrātya-P. 186— Diese Bedeutung Von *Vrāta* durch heilige Zeremonien Zusammengebundenen Schar der Eingeweihten halte ich auf Grund der Resultate der Vergleichenden Religionsgeschichte für die älteste und diesen *Vrāta* für den Ausgangspunkt aller späteren Entwicklungen. Die Untersuchung der wenigen Stellen der Vedischen Literature in denen *Vrāta* Vorkommt hat dargetan dass das Wort bedeutet *Vrāta* ist also religionsgeschichtlich gesprochen 'heilige Schar'

Cf P. 187-188, 189 *Rudra as Vratapati*, 190-91, Cf *KSS* XXV, 5, 1 (*त्रातपतीय*—)

ASS II 12 6 (*त्रातपत*)

10 *VS*-XXX 8, *TB*-III 4 5 1

is included in the list of victims at the *Puruṣamedha* in the *Yajurveda*, no further explanation is given there about it. The Vratyas seem to have been some moving groups outside the orthodox aryan scheme.¹¹ The *Sūtras* mention their “*arhan’as*” (saints) and “*Yaudhas*” (warriors). There is a clear reference to their nomadic life. That, the Vratyas were a people¹², is evident from the fact that there occur the words—“*Usnisa, Vipatha, pratoda*” etc. Though themselves uninitiated, they spoke the language of the initiated, but calling that, which is easy to utter, difficult. This may mean that the non Brāhmaṇical Indians were advancing more rapidly to *Prākṛta* speech, especially if it is legitimate to connect the Vratyas with the barbarians in speech alluded to in the *SB*¹³. The aryan culture, itself, is nothing more than a synthetic product and most of the *Upanishads* and the *puranas* are derived basically from the Vratya source¹⁴.

The Vratya theory explains the origin of a number of castes from the sons of twice born who became Vratyas for not fulfilling the sacred duties¹⁵. *Manu* is explicit on the definition and classification of the Vratyas. If the three castes do not receive the sacrament during the prescribed period, they become *Vratyas* or outcastes, excluded from *Savitrī* and despised by the Aryans¹⁶. From a Vratya of the Brahmana caste spring the wicked *Bhriggakantaka*, the *Avantya*, the *Vatadhana*, the *Puspagadha* and *Saikha*¹⁷. The

11 PB-XVII 1 2, Cf *Transaction of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* XV, XXXI, XXXII

12 Bloomfield—*Atharvaveda* p 94

13 SB-III 2, 1, 23 24

14 *IHQ-X* (S. K. Dey's article), *India and the World-III*, *Probuddha Bharata*—XXXIX, *ABORI-XVII*, *Man in India*—XVII, *JBORS-XXIV*, *AV VII 3 18*

15 *Manu* X 20

16 *Ibid*-II 39

17 *Ibid*-X 21

commentators are of opinion that all the above mentioned people or races were descended from the Vrātya Brāhmaṇa and a female of his own caste. The Jhallas, Mallas, Licchavis, Nata, Karna, Khata and the Dravida are all descended from the Vrātyakṣatriya¹⁸. The Sudhama, Kūrūṣa, and Satvata are descended from the Vrātya Vaiśya¹⁹. Manu is definite on the point that the Vrātyas had a different way of living, i. e., the Vrātyas cast off a relative, taught the Veda for wages and sold goods which one ought not to sell²⁰. With such persons, the Brāhmaṇa should not, even in times of distress, form connection²¹ either through the *Vedas* or by marriage. Many castes were formed by a degradation from the original *Varṇas* on account of non-observance of rites. They were a band of nomad non-conformists absolutely independent and not following the aryan way of life²².

Let us now discuss, in brief, the history of the various tribes mentioned by Manu in connection with the Vrātyas. The commentators say that there were something like castes. Buhler thinks that "it is very probable that all these names originally denoted nation." It is well known that they develo-

18. *Ibid*-X. 22—Cf. N.K. Datta—"Origin of Castes in India" Vol. I.

19. *Ibid*-X. 23

20. *Ibid*-XI. 63—Cf. B.R. Ambedkara—"We are the Untouchables" pp. 25, 193-94

Cf. Muir—*Original Sanskrit texts* Vol. I. p. 22.

21. *Ibid*-II. 39, 40.

22. M. C. Pandya—*Intelligent man's guide to Indian Philosophy*, pp. 272, 288, 347

—We learn from the *RV* that Vedic tribes prayed to Indra to bring their kith and kin under control. It probably refers to an attempt by the *Yajurvedic* group to bring those who belonged to their own stock but were severed and had gone astray. J. G. Glanville takes them to be the Vrātyas of *Manu*.

Cf. *JBORS*-XXIV p. 105 (Part III).

ped their own institutions and the most prominent among them were the *Mallas*, *Vātadhanas*, *Kārūsa* and the *Licchavis*

(1) The *Mallas* —We find the *Mallas* as a powerful people in the time of the Buddha. They are classed with *Angas*, *Vangas* and *Kalingas* in the *Epic*²³. They belong to the Kshatriya caste and according to Manu, they were Vrātyas. Both the Buddhist sources²⁴ and Kauṭilya agree that they were a *Samgha* or corporation. They followed a different religious system and were probably *caitya* worshippers. They believed in the heretical form of worship like Jainism and Buddhism which had nothing to do with the Vedic system.

(ii) The *Vātadhanas*—Along with the *Vahlikas*, *Ābhuras*, *Aparāntakas*, the *Śūdras*, the *Vātadhanas* figure prominently in the *Purānas*²⁵. Manu treats them as Vrātyas. They are taken to be the offsprings of an outcaste Brāhmana woman.

(iii) The *Kārūsas*—They are ancient people and are referred to in the *MBH* and the *Purānas*. *Kārūsa* was one of the nine sons of *Vaivaśvata Manu*²⁶. Various Kshatriya tribes were descended from the *Kārūsas*. Pargiter believes that they protected northern India from the southern invasions²⁷. They are mentioned with *Pancalas*, *Cedis*, *Kasis* and *Matsyas* in the

23 *MBH* (*Bhīṣmaparva*-IX 46)

24 *Sumangalavilāsinī*-III p 971

25 *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna*-LVII 36, 44. There is slightly different reading of the name as *Vādhadhana* in the *Vāyu* -p XIV, 115; Cf *Ādi-parva*-LXVII *Sabhā-parva*-XXXI 1190-1, 1 1826 *Udyoga-parva*-III 86, XVIII 569-601, *Bhīṣmaparva*-IX. 3*4; *Drona-parva*-XI 398,

Cf *Der Vrātya*-pp 223-33, Cf *Yādavaprakāśa-Vajrayanti*—ब्रह्मसुताश्च शत्रुकोशमन्त्रादिवेदिनः ।

26. *Vāyu*-85 3 4, 86 2 3, *Brahmānda*-7 1 2, *Śiṣupurāna*-VII 60 1-2, *Kṛma*-1 20 4-6, *Garuda*-142 4, *Viṣṇu*-IV. 1 14, *Bhāg*-XX 2, 16

27 Pargiter—*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*

*MBH*²⁸ and with the *Matsyas*, *Cedis* and *Bhojas* in the *Viṣṇu purāṇa*²⁹ According to Pargiter, they extended up to the confines of Bihar, a tradition supported by an epigraphic evidence An inscription found at Masar in the district of Shahabad designates the territory as Kārusadeśa³⁰ The *Karūsa* is mentioned as one of the *Vratya Vaiśyas* by Manu According to Mm Śāstri *Karūsas* gave their name to the country between Kōśala and Videha³¹

(iv) The *Licchavis*—They were a great people in eastern India Kautilya mentions them along with the *Vrjjis*, *Mallas*, *Madras*, *Kukurās*, *Kurupanchala* and others as “*Rajasabdopajvinah*”³² Kautilya distinguishes *Licchavis* from the *Vrjjis* Fahien does not mention *Vrjji* and Hiuen-tsang describes *Vrjji* and *Vaiśali* as two different countries The *Licchavis* call themselves Kshatriyas while Manu calls them *Vratyakshatriya* The kinship of the *Licchavis* and the *Mallas* is confirmed by the Buddhist sources³³ *Licchavi* is the name of a race or a tribe and during the time of the Buddha and Mahavira, they were recognised as Kshatriyas According to Manu, they were not very careful in obeying orthodox regulation about initiation and other matters and as such were termed as “*avrata*” It was here in the *Licchavi* region that the two great heretical

28 *Bhīṣma*-47 4 56 13 54 8 *Drona*-8 26 20 23

29 *Viṣṇu*-(Wilson) II pp 156 90

30 *ASR*-III 67 71, Cf *JASB* (1895) p 255, *JRAS* (1914) p 271, *Pārāṇi*-IV 1 178 Mart n—*Eastern India*-I 405 N L Dey—*Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and medieval India*-p 95 *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*-X 66 *Vāyu*-45 *Matsya*-114 54, *Markandeya Purāṇa*-57, 53 55

31 *ML*-18

32 *Arthśāstra*-p 455 also - Cf - H Pandya—*Notes on the Vajji country and the Mallas of Pāṇā* —

33 *SBE* XI 121 22, *Dialogues of Buddha* III 202, *JBORS*-VI p 259

faiths like Jainism and Buddhism developed. The prevalence of heretical sects in these regions is indicative of the fact that they were not very much amenable to the orthodox cult of the Aryans, even if they are taken to have descended from the Aryans^{33(a)}

If these people be taken as Aryans then it must be said that after some time they soon outgrew the influence of their predecessors and developed their own independent system in all spheres. A gloss over the history of eastern India shows that there existed side by side two different political systems and two different streams of intellectual thought. The intellectual, political and moral upheaval in India in the 6th century B.C. is a pointer in this respect as it released a new lease of life. Brāhmanical hold over intellectual life was discarded in favour of a monastic order. The importance of the *Samgha* was realised even by an arch imperialist like Kauṭilya who advised Chandragupta Maurya to seek their help as they were united and their unity was never to be broken.

33(a) *Der Vrātya*-p. 226—"Jedenfalls bestehen enge Zusammenhänge zwischen den Lichchivi und den religiösen Bewegungen, die sich im Buddhismus Kristallisierten".

P. 227—"Dass bei den Maitreyaka der Zukünftige Buddha im Mittelpunkt stand, ist an Zuneigen. Wir hatten also hier ein Zeugnis für den Beginn des Mahāyāna-Buddhismus unter den Vrātya".

"Also sind zur Zeit Manus, der doch wohl eine ältere Tradition wiedergibt, auch die Verehrer Kṛṣṇas als Vrātya betrachtet worden, hier ist daran zu erinnern, dass die Vorfahren Buddhas die Rukmiṇī, die Gattin des Kṛṣṇa, verehrt haben. Wenn wir bedenken, dass die Zeremonien ruht und dass Viṣṇu selber in BSS als Sthāpati der Vrātya auftritt also nach uralter Tradition mit den Vrātya aufs engste Verknüpft gewesen sein muss, so brauchen wir uns über diese Einreihung der Kṛṣṇa-Verehrer unter die Vrātya nicht mehr zu wundern".

The Vrātyas had some special connection with the people of Magadha and the cult of Śiva. The *Vṛjjis* were also regarded as Vrātyas and the *Kuru* birds regarded the *Yādava* chiefs as Vrātyas. Bhandarkar (R.G.) holds that *Rudra Śiva* had a close connection with Vrātyas who were not included in the Aryan community³⁴. *Rudra-Śiva* cult was worshipped by the irregular people. Rudra was the protector of the Vrātyas³⁵. He was the ruler of the outcastes³⁶. According to Winternitz, the Vrātyas were certain tribes living outside the pale of Brāhmanism³⁷.

According to Megasthenes, the aryan Indians were surrounded on all sides by the indigenous tribes in a state of barbarism, from whom they differed both in mind and disposition. They were most acutely sensible of this difference. The barbarians were excluded from the Indian common wealth³⁸. Megasthenes says that India was peopled by races both numerous and diverse of which not one was originally of foreign descent, but all were evidently indigenous³⁹. A description of Dionysos, as given by Megasthenes, deserves consideration here. Dionysos was bred in his father's thigh. He taught arts conducive to the human wellbeing. He showed the people how to worship the deity⁴⁰ and introduced Laws

34 *Collected Works*-IV 163

35 *Ibid*-149

36 *Ibid*-147, RV. X, 92. 9 (Rudra referred to as Śiva), *Sukta Yajurveda Sam* -Chapter 16

Rudra is said to have wielded the *Pañaka* bow. The *Śisnadevas* do not refer to the worshipper of Śivalinga. Yāskara and Sāyana explain *Śisnadevas* as those who were too much addicted to sexual pleasure. Śrīkara in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* (2. 2. 42) quotes RV *Sa Jhita* (V. 3. 3) in which he says that there is a reference to Viṣṇu worshipping the Śivalinga.

37 *Op Cit* —

38 Sarkar—*Op Cit* 63—'The Vrātyas correspond to the Non aīas'.

39 Merindale—*Ancient India*-pp 20-21

40 *PAIOT*-III pp 265 ff Cf *CR* (May 1924) for his views on the Vrātyas

and Courts of justice. He was regarded as a deity and he gained immortal honours⁴¹. At the head of an army, he is said to have marched to every part of the world⁴². He is also called *Katapogon* probably because he nourished his beards with great care. The description of Dionysos is strikingly similar to that of Ekavratya. Mr Chattopadhyāya identifies Boudyas, son of Dionysos, with Buddha Saumayana, Sthapati of the Daiva Vratyas. It may be pointed out, however, that Dionysos⁴³ "made his appearance coming from the regions lying to the west", while we know that the Vratyas were connected with the east. Of course, some western tribes have been designated as Vratyas in the *MBH* and the *Purānas*, but the fact remains that the Vratyas were connected with the east. Ekavratya is associated with the Rajanya culture of the east. It is remarkable to note that Dionysos is also connected with the origin of royalty in India. The reference to beverage in the *AV*, made of rice, is also supported by the Greek sources⁴⁴. Hence one is tempted to identify Dionysos with Ekavrātya.

The dress, equipments and companions of the Vrātyas are also important in so far as the study of their identity is concerned. The dress of the Śiśunāga statues appears to have consisted of *Vasasi* or two pieces of cloth, upper and lower (*Dhoti* and *Chādar*), a pair of *Upānah* or shoes, umbrella, *Usnisa*, a pair of ear ornaments, a *niska* or necklace. This is the dress, prescribed for a Brahmana, who has finished his

41 Macrindle-*Op Cit* -36

42 *Ibid*-P 35-note—"The place is pointed out in India even to this day where the god had been and that cities are called by his name in the vernacular dialects and that many other important evidences still exist"

For the present, we cannot accept the findings of Prof. K. G. Chattopadhyaya

Cf *Der Vratyas*-p 240

43, Macrindle-*Op Cit* p 35

44 *Ibid*-p 68

education (AGS) If we study the Śiśunāga cress in the figure of KSS (XXII 4), it is apparent that the Śiśunāga statues are clad in one piece, the upper part of the body being left bare. There is a strong similarity between the dress of these statues and those of the Vratyas. The two strings are also visible in the statues. The lower garment in the statues is fastened by two strings, the more prominent one going round the waist and being tied with a knot, in front of it the two ends of which are hanging over the garment. On the left there is another string, hanging in two folds over the garment. Kātyāyana's *Karnali* (ear ornament) can also be seen in the statues. There is a *niska* in the statues. The partly broken statues are bare-footed. Mm. Śāstri believes that while writing on the Vratyas, Kātyāyana had the Vratyas of Magadha in mind. Regarding the inscription on the statues, Mm. Śāstri observes—

"I would go straight and say it Vrātya Nandi, Vrātya being used in good sense. The words 'Bhage' and 'Vata' are the names. 'Vata' represents the idea that the ~~king~~ should have dignity of a Vratya king and 'Bhage' ~~means~~ power. 'Saba-khato' in all dominion." (JBORS-V-2-IV. PP, 554 - ff, Cf - my - 'Select Inscriptions of E.L. - P. 1).

is the benefactor of human society. As a benefactor of mankind he is always on the move.⁴⁵ He propitiates all and thereafter becomes the ruler of the people. He completely follows the aspiration of his subjects and the popular assembly, the council, army and treasury all become amenable to his wishes⁴⁶. The Vrātya tradition was sufficiently deeprooted as we find that when Kauśitaka, the leader, left the Vrātya camp, he kept the system of *Āsandi* intact⁴⁷.

Vrātyas possessed knowledge about silver and generally used silver ornaments. It is doubtful if they had any knowledge of iron. We have no definite proof about their knowledge of iron, though they were so intimately associated with Bihar. They thrived on the labour of others and did not take to agriculture. It seems that they continued to be wanderers in different directions for sufficiently long period. After they settled, they had a regular flow of edibles and cereals by way of *Dakṣiṇā* or offerings. Those, who adopted their system later on, came to be called as heretics by the orthodox thinkers, Dr. Sarkar believes that the *Atharvaveda* is a book of the

course of time, he comes to know the circumstances of his birth, and invents the *AV* and its black magic in order to take revenge upon his parents This is the Jain version of the origin of the magic rites of the *AV*. Cf K K. Handiqui-
Taśastilaka and Indian Culture—pp 380-81.

45. *AV*—XV. 1. 1.

46. *Ibid*—XV. 9 1

Cf. *Der Vratya*—p. 315—"Als die Vrātya-Religion durch die Belehrung bedeutender Führer zu der orthodoxen Richtung diese beeinflusste, vollzog sich hier eine neue Entwicklung, welche durch die Upaniṣaden angezeigt ist, in denen der Ekavrātya als höchstes Princip erscheint. Es sind, wie wir schon gesehen haben und noch sehen werden, vor allem die Upaniṣaden, in denen Prāṇa, die grosse Urmacht des Mahāvratā, und Rudra-Śiva als oberste Gottheiten verehrt wurden.....".

47. *BA*—

*Angirasa*s of the lower Gangetic plain. Some aspects of Vedic culture are associated with Bihar and some of the Vedic styles were derived from the *Vrātya* and Magadhan sources^{47(a)}. The *Prāchīna* was occupied by the *Vrātyas*. They occupied an area "assigned"⁴⁸ by tradition to a stock different from the *Mānava*s and the *Ailas* but with superimposed layers of *Ailas*.

The exact meaning of the word '*Māgadha*' has not yet been conclusively brought out. *Māgadha* means one belonging to Magadha country or a professional bard. It is due to the obscurity of the *Vrātya* book that the proper meaning of the passages, connected with Magadha, is not altogether clear. It is, therefore, possible to suggest that here the dissolute minstrel might be intended. Still the connection, set forth in the *Srautasūtras* of *Lāṭyāyana* and *Drāhyana*, as well as in the corresponding passages of the *Kātyāsūtras*, between the *Vrātyas* and *Magadhadeśīya Brahmanandhus* and the hatred with the Magadhans, both lead us to interpret the *Māgadha* of the *Vrātya* book as a heretical teacher⁴⁹. It is said that after their conversion, the *Vrātyas* should bestow all their belongings upon an inferior *Brāhmaṇa* who has been omitting, for long, *Sandhyopāsanā* and who hails from Magadha or the belongings should be given away to those who have not yet abandoned *Vrātya* practices⁵⁰. Even when the *Vrātyas* were converted, Magadha continued to be a centre of various heretical sects. Magadha was the centre of *Vrātya* culture and that point is supported by *Kātyāyana* and *Lāṭyāyana*. On account of the exaltation of the *Vrātyas*, it has now been difficult, rather obscure, to trace their actual origin and lineage.

47(a) R. K. Chaudhary—*History of Bihar*—Introduction

48 Sarkar—*Op Cit* p 46

49 Weber—*History of Indian Literature*—p 112

50 *ISS*—XXII 4 24-25, According to some *Māgadha* refers to 'Geyā'—अविरतेभ्यो वा प्रात्यक्षणात् ।

The result has been that for a sufficiently long period a *Māgadha* was prescribed for an undignified rite only⁵¹.

The *Māgadhas* have been referred to be of mixed origin⁵². Even the *Licchavis* were not very friendly to the orthodox Hinduism, and were always found among the foremost champions of heretical creeds. Same is the case with *Vṛṣṇi-Andhakas*, who are classed as *Vrātyas* in the *MBH* (*Dronaparva* 141. 15). *Sātratas* were the progenitors of the *Andhaka-Vṛṣṇis*, *Sātratas* were defeated by the *Bharatas*. Owing to the pressure of the

51. Cf. *JB-II*. 404; The *Puruṣamedha* was a symbolic rite..... These are enumerated in the *VS XXX*. 6. 22; *TB*. III. 4; *SB-XIII*. 6. 2. 12, 13—"Now, the victims had the fire earned round them, but they were not yet slaughtered. Then a voice said to him, *Puruṣa*, do not consummate.....". *KSS-XXI*. 1. 12; *Vaiṣṇava SS-XXXVII*. 10 ff, *Śāthyaṣyana SS-XVI*. 10 In both the *Sūtras*—"this sacrifice is represented as being undertaken...for the healing of the sacrificer's bodily infirmities... might seem sufficient to stamp the ceremony as one partaking more of the nature of the superstitious rites of the *Atiāra* priests than that of the great sacrifices of the traditional *Śrauta* rituals". Keith holds that the ritual is "merely a priestly invention to fill up the apparent gap in the sacrificial system which provided no place for man". According to Hillebrandt this was a relic of the barbaric age (Cf. *Ritual Literature*-p 153)
52. *BDS-I*. 1. 20. *Vrātyas* were those who were degraded from their castes by neglect of their religious duties. Among the castes, branded as fallen, in the *VS-XXX*. 6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18 are—(i) *Nisāda*; (ii) *Vrātya*—(a band of nomads non-conformists of aryan extraction but absolutely independent and not following aryan way of life); (iii) *Bhāl*; (iv) *Kirāta*; (v) *Palaska*; (vi) *Chāṇḍāla*—Hunters, Fishermen, savages were included in this class of degraded persons. Also Cf. *Tājñavalkya-I*. 38; *Manu-II*. 39.

For—*Magadha* being associated with *Magas* of Arakan—Cf. *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* Chapters 139 & 140.

Paurāṇa line of Magadha, there was an exodus of the *Yadavas* from Mathura. This was further accelerated by the *Kurus*. From all these, one can deduce that the Magadhan culture was decidedly a non-Vedic one. The extravagant faith in spells and *mantras* in the *AV*, is unknown to the earlier *Vedas*. All these and other factors signify that the eastern Vratya culture of the Gangetic valley was possibly pre historic and the later details came to be worked out after the aryan settlement in India and their contact with the Vratyas. The aryan, after coming into contact with the pre historic Vratya culture, sought the protection of Rudra for safety, security and peace on all sides⁵³. We find *Ādityas*, *Rudras* and *Vasus* worshipping *Angirasa*⁵⁴.

There is no evidence to show that the *Śukla āryas* ever even entered the country lying immediately east of the Indus. When they first formed their deep laid plans for the creation of Brahmanism and caste, the *Dasyu* instigated priestly factions among the *dark fire* and their associates made up their mind to filch all these vital elements from *Śukla āryas*—race, name, race tradition, language, religion, philosophy, in a disguised form, and culture generally, and then to cut themselves adrift from their exploited victims, to throw them aside, like sucked oranges, to have nothing more to do with them, except by way of aspersion⁵⁵.

The *Nisadas* and the *Vahlikas* have also been classed as Vratyas in ancient literature. The *Vahlikas* are said to have established themselves, with all their booty, in the renowned *Madhyadesa* and claiming to be aryan⁵⁶. The *Vahlikas* also figure in the *Mehrauli pillar inscription*⁵⁷. *Vahlika* is in the

53 Griffith Op Cit—P 277, *AV* XIX 18 3

54 *Ibid*-443 — XX 135 9

55 *JDL*-IV 41

56 *Ibid*-42

57 *CII*-III 141, Verse I

—यस्योदत्तयत् प्रतीपमुरसाशत्रूनामेत्यागता

north probably near the oxus. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar⁵⁵ placed it on the Vipāśā (on the authority of the *Rāmāyana*). Dr. D. C. Sircar rejects this identification with the help of the *MBH*⁵⁹. According to the *MBH* (*Karnaparva* – 44, 10), the people of Vahlīka were not descended from Prajāpati. It was outside the pale of Brahmāvarta⁶⁰ and was as such classed along with the Vrātyas, as pointed out earlier. Various tribes within the area were called 'Naṣṭadharmā'⁶¹. All these people, enumerated above were outside the pale of Brāhmanism and, as such, called Vrātya or fallen. The "Pañcha-Janāh" were "dark warrior peoples" and were intruders into the *Saptasindhava*. They were not the aryaṇas⁶².

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that the Vrātyas were a class of people different from the aryaṇas. From a study of the Vrātya culture, it is evident that in all matters they were at poles apart from the Vedic aryaṇa. All authorities agree that the Vrātyas were those who were considered to be fallen from the path of the Vedic orthodoxy, or regulation. They did not abide by the Vedic law or custom. It appears that they were a people of northern India, since time immemorial, following their own distinct customs and regulations. The facts, at our disposal, point to a period when these people had not totally given up their nomadic habits. The *AV* also confirms that the Vrātyas moved in all directions. In course of their movement, they came into contact with different sorts

स्वेद्वशाद्वर्तिनोऽमिलिरिताखल्लेनवीतिर्मुञ्जे ।
तीर्त्वासप्तमुखानि येनसमरे सिन्धोर्जितावाह्विवा
यस्याद्यायधिवास्वते जलनिधिर्वीच्यामिलेदक्षिण ।

58. *JAHRS*-X. 86 ff.

59. *Kane Commemoration Volume*—p. 440.

60. Cunningham—*Geography of ancient India*—pp. 247, 686-87.

Cf V. S. Agrawal—"Patalyaji and Vāhikagrāma" in the '*Indian Culture*' (1939-October) pp. 129 ff.

61. *Karna Parva*—44, 32.

62. *JDL*-VII. 260 ff.

of persons and there was some sort of interchange of cultural ideas. The *AV* must have been taken into the Vedic fold only after the assimilative character of the Vedic aryaans had reached its peak and it was only after that assimilation of different races that the leader of the *Vrātyas* was glorified. The absorption of the erstwhile hated *Śiva* along with *Rudra* is an indication in this direction. The classes, designated as *Vrātyas* in the Epic, the *Purānas* and *Sūtra* literature are different and all of them have different customs altogether. Their apathy towards the Vedic orthodoxy is only common point among them and possibly for this reason only, all of them were treated as *Vrātyas*.

In different regions where these peoples lived, they had their own customs and ways of living. After the end of the nomadic habits, they stabilised themselves in different regions and developed their own institutions, but of all these, the people of eastern India showed marked development. While there was a movement towards imperialist expansion under the hegemony of Magadha, there began at the same time the experiment in democratic government among the *Licchavis*, *Vrjjis*, *Mallas*, *Śakyas* and so on. The heretical movements like the *Ājivikas*, *Jainas* and the *Buddhists* found their ground ready in this part of eastern India and in the early historical period, Buddhism, though born in Magadha, received its garb in Avanti. All these remarkable and unprecedented developments in the realm of political thought and culture made Magadha and other parts of eastern India as the pronounced centre of *Vrātya* culture and an object of aspersion by orthodox thinkers. It was after the aryanisation of Mithilā that these heretical movements gained momentum. Why and how was it possible? This was so because of the inherent original culture of the easterners, who, even after being aryanised, refused to give up their age old tradition and customs. Viewed in this context, the question is not of the fact whether the *Vrātyas* were aryaans or non aryaans but of the cultural traits of the entire easterners.

The peculiarities of the Vrātyas were the national traits of all the easterners. Other peoples, not following Vedic custom, were also classed as Vrātyas for the same reason. Their individuality could not be crushed even by those aryaans, who considered themselves to be supreme. In this context, it would be better if we try, with the help of other sources, to find out many more details of the cultural contributions of the Vrātyas. Anthropology may prove to be of some help in this connection. The Vrātyas were the original inhabitants of eastern India and their hold was so great that they succeeded in overpowering culturally the Aryans in many respects. The *Atharvaveda* and the *Kausitaki Upanishad* are the living examples of their contribution in the intellectual field. The *Purānas* preserve a good account of the Vrātya tradition and even now a good number of people living in different corners of north-eastern India, remind us of the existence of a separate culture in ancient Bihar. Bihar, through the ages, has made remarkable contributions towards the development of our national thought and culture. The Vrātyas were the forerunners of all radical movements of later times. A thorough investigation of all aspects of Vrātya history is yet a desideratum. Whatever sources are there, they belong to a tradition opposed to the Vrātyas. A patient investigation of all the sources can help us in removing the mystery surrounding the problem of the Vrātyas.

They belonged to Magadha in the east. They were nomadic tribes and devoid of all orthodoxy in the beginning. Their tribal character is evident if we accept the derivation of the term from '*Vrata*' (used in the sense of multitude). They were not governed by the rules of caste. As the original inhabitants of India, they were the worshippers of Śiva and that is why the Rigvedic people looked upon them with abhorrence. The cult of the Vrātya is associated with the pre-historic form of Śiva. It is only in the Vrātya tradition (*Praśna* and *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad* of the *Atharvaveda*) that we have a succinct account of their cult. It may be suggested here that the *AV* (at least

the XVth. Kāṇḍa) is a fragment of the traditional literary output of the Vrātyas. The latest research on the subject (A. C. Banerjee.—*Studies in the Brāhmaṇas*—Delhi-1963) does not seem to have made any considerable progress in so far as the interpretation of the Vrātya is concerned. A. C. Banerje says—"It represents an independent tradition of certain tribes who may have had some affinity with the Bṛgu-Aṅgirasas. They were formerly *Rājanyas* with esoteric beliefs, and ritual practices, which were recorded in a Brāhmaṇa completely lost to us" (*Ibid.* P. 133). What forced the Brāhmaṇas to create myth around the Vrātyas and their tradition is yet an unsolved enigma in the realm of indological knowledge. We have in the *Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa* a detailed account of the Vrātya way of life. Their culture is depicted not only in the *AV* but in a number of later texts. They were different from the Brāhmaṇas only as far as their adherence to a different form of ritual was concerned. The intimate connection of the Vrātyas with the Vainyas is a point to be reckoned with in the post-Vedic period. The Vrātyas did not attach any importance to the act of purification and the entire range of primitive rites came under the purview of the Vrātya system.

APPENDIX-I

कात्यायनश्रौतसूत्र (कर्कभाष्य)

XXII.4.1-27

(Original Text and translation in English)

(Translated by the author)

कर्कभाष्यसहितम् कात्यायनश्रौतसूत्रम्

(-cf. कात्यायनश्रौतसूत्रम् edited by विद्याधर शर्मा काशी संवत् १९८७)

(चत्वारो व्रात्यस्तोमा गणयज्ञाः ।)

XXII-4

(1) व्रात्यस्तोमाश्चत्वारः—

अग्निष्टोमसंस्थाकार्याः । (Kasi ed.) व्रात्यस्तोमसंज्ञकारचत्वारः क्रतवो भवन्ति । व्रात्याः प्रसिद्धा एव त्रिपुरं पतितसावित्रीकाः । प्रायश्चित्तार्थं वाच लौकिकेऽनौ भवन्ति । न ह्येतैराधानं प्रयुज्यते, अतदङ्गत्वात् ।

षोडशवर्षा अप्यनुपनीतास्त्रयः पुरुषे येषां ते सावित्रीपतिता व्रात्याः । अन्येऽपि ये द्विजातिकर्म परित्यज्य हीनकर्माचरणशीलास्तेऽपि व्रात्याः । तेषां स्तोमा व्रात्यस्तोमाः ।

(लाट्या० ८।६ - 'Kashi ed')

There are four kinds of sacrificial rites which are commonly known as 'Vrātya-Stoma'. The Vrātyas are well-known as those who from three successive generations have been deprived of the Sāvitrī. And because these (rites) are expiatory, they are held in ordinary fire. They do not require lighting sacred fire, as it does not form its part.

(2) व्रात्यगणस्य ये सम्पादयेयुस्ते प्रथमेन यजेरन् ॥

१—ये व्रात्या नृत्यगीतवाद्यशस्त्रधारणादौ स्वयं प्रवीणाः सन्तः उपदेयारो भूत्वा स्वां विद्यां व्रात्यसमूहस्य सम्पादयेयुः शिष्येयुः पाठयेयुः ते प्रथमेन यजेरन् ।

Those Vrātyas well versed in the arts of dancing, music, instrumental music, and bearing of arms and weapons teaching the same to the other Vrātyas should perform the sacrificial rites of the first order.

(3) सम्पादनं च गायननर्तकादीनाम् । तेषां प्रथमेऽधिकारः ॥

(This is not in the Kashi edition)

This training is imparted to the musicians and dancers (among the Vrātyas). They are entitled to the first (Kind of Vrātya Stoma).

(4) द्वितीयेन निन्दिता नृशंसाः—

१—ये नृशंसा निन्दिता नृभिर्मनुष्यैरभिशंसनेन पापाध्यारोपणेन निन्दिताः गर्हिताः ज्ञातिभिर्वहिष्कृताः ते द्वितीयेन यजेरन् ।

Those base persons charged (by honourable men) of sins and excommunicated should perform the rites of the second order.

(5) तृतीयेन कनिष्ठा :—

तपसा कनिष्ठाः=युवान एव ज्ञातिभिर्वहिष्कृताः शुद्ध्यर्थं तृतीयेन ब्राह्म्यस्तोमेन यजेरन् (ताण्ड्य—१७।३।२) ।

The youngsters (should perform the rites) with the third one.

(6) ज्येष्ठाश्चतुर्थेन :—(१७।३।३ ताण्ड्य) ।

The elders are entitled to the rites of the fourth order.

(ब्राह्म्यस्तोमे गृहपति) काशी

ज्येष्ठशब्दार्थमाह—

(7) अपेन प्रजनना स्थविरास्तदाख्याः—

तेषां यो नृशंसस्तमः स्याद् द्रव्यवत्तमो वाऽनूचानतमो वा ।

The old persons having retired from the act of procreation are known as ज्येष्ठाः

तस्य महिपते दीक्षरेण । (Kāshi)

Com. अपगतप्रजननेन्द्रियसामर्थ्या यौवनापगमनेन स्थविरा वृद्धा ज्येष्ठा संज्ञा भवन्ति । तेषां मध्ये यो निन्दिततमादिः स गृहपतिकार्यः । ब्राह्म्यस्तोमाश्च लौकिकेऽग्नौ कार्या इति कर्काचार्यः (१।१।१४) । तेनात्र गार्हपत्योऽग्नि-लौकिक एव नाधाननिष्पन्नः । ब्राह्म्यस्तोमार्थमाधानं कार्यमित्यपरे । तथा च गृह-कारिकाकारः—“अभार्यस्यानधीतस्य स्यादाधानं तदर्थतः ।” (१।१४५)—(Kāshi ed)

(8) तेषां यो नृशंसस्तमः स्याद् द्रव्यवत्तमो वाऽनूचानतमो वा तस्य गार्हपते दीक्षरेण ।

Among them, one, who happens to be the basest, the richest and the most (devoted to learning) well-behaved, should be installed in the position and dignity of a householder.

(9) तस्य भक्षमनुभक्षयन्त आसीरन् ।

They should eat the remainder of his food.

(No. 8 of Kāshi) इतरे ब्राह्म्या गृहपतेर्भक्षं सोमादिकं भक्षयन्त आसीरन् । यजमानचमसादिकं प्रथमे गृहपतिर्भक्षयति, पश्चादितरे भक्षयन्तीत्यर्थः ॥ ८ ॥

(10) घ्रात्यधनानि भवन्ति ।

There are properties of a Vrātya. (They are as follows).

वक्ष्यमाणान्युष्णीषादीनि घ्रात्यानां धनानि भवन्ति (ताण्ड्य-१७।१।१४-१५)—

॥ ९ ॥

(11) तिर्यङ्मण्डमुष्णीषं प्रतोदः

A turban obliquely wound round the head and a long whip—एक घ्रात्यधनमिदम्—(10 of Kashi)

11 of Kashi—प्रतोदः—अनङ्गुश्रेणसाधनं प्राजनः=प्रतोदः । इदं द्वितीयं घ्रात्यधनम् ॥ ११ ॥

(12) 'ज्याहोहोऽयोग्यं धनुस्तदाख्यम् स्वकार्यं साधनासमर्थं धनुस्तदार्यं ज्याहोहोशब्दवाच्यमित्यर्थः । is 13 of Kashi edition—

A kind of bow not used for shooting. इदं तृतीयं घ्रात्यधनं ॥ १२ ॥

(13) वासः कृष्णशं कद्रु (14 of Kashi)

Note—कृष्णमशितं येन तत्करणे न कृष्णशमित्युच्यते । कृष्णसूत्रोतमित्यर्थः । तत्कद्रुवाख्यम् ।

(They wear) clothes woven out of blackish thread ; the clothes are also called Kadru (reddish-brown).

—कृष्णसूत्रोतमित्यर्थः । कृष्णसूत्रोतं वासः कद्रु इत्युच्यते—तदपि घ्रात्यधनम् ।

(14) स्वयमकृष्णं सत् यत्कृष्णदशं वासः तद्वा कद्रुवाख्यम्—अकृष्णं कृष्णदशं वा तदाख्यम् । (15 of Kashi)

The 'Kadru' may also be referred to a cloth which has a black selvage.

(15) फलकास्तीर्णो विपथः । (16 of Kashi)

Their chariot is covered with planks (फलक may also mean fruit)—फलकैरास्तीर्णं आच्छादितो विपथः=अमार्गगामी रथः । सोऽपि घ्रात्यधनम् । (Sic.)

(16) अश्वाश्चतराभ्यां कम्प्राभ्यां युक्तः स्यादित्येके । (17 of Kashi)

It is driven by two agile mules or horses. (Some are of this opinion) (Sic.)

(17) निष्को राजतः (18 of Kashi)—राजतो निष्कः कण्ठाभरणं घ्रात्यधनम् ।

(They wear) an ornament made of silver for neck or breast.

(18) अजिने पार्श्वसहिते कृष्णवल्लवे मेघयोश्चर्मणी पार्श्वतस्तन्तुनि स्यूतै आविके । सलग्ने शुक्लकृष्णवर्णे व्रात्यधनम् ।

They wear the hairy skin of a black antelope (together with black and white woollen blankets) भवत

(19) तद्गृहपते ।

This much about the householder (गृहपति)

(20) एवमेवाजिनानीतरेषाम् ।

Note —इतरेषा व्रात्यानामेवमेवाजिनानि भवन्ति—

The other Vratyas also wear similar skin of the antelopes as referred to above

आविकानि पासांसि = मेघरोमनिर्मितानि वस्त्राणि गृहपत्यतिरिक्ताना सर्वेषा व्रात्याना धनानि भवन्ति । कीदृशानि, दामतूपाणि । तूषो = वस्त्राणि ।

(21) दामतूपाणि बल्लुकान्तानि द्विचूडान्याविकानि वासाऽसि लोहितान्तानि कृष्णान्तानि वा तद्व्रात्यानि ।

The Vratyas (other than the householder) wear blankets having two *protuberances* red or black threads for fringes, and clothes with red or black borders

(22) द्वे द्वे दामनी उपानहौ च कर्णिन्यौ कृष्णे स्यातामित्येके ॥ दामनी द्वे द्वे ॥

(23) उपानहौ च कर्णिन्यौ कृष्णे स्यातामित्येके ॥

Some say that they wear black shoes furnished with flaps

(24) मागधदेशीयाय ब्रह्मबन्धवे दक्षिणाकाले व्रात्यधनानि दद्यु । —(सर्व एव व्रात्या पूर्वोक्तानि व्रात्यधनानि दद्यु (Lat 8/6/28)

Note —सर्व एव व्रात्या मगधदेशनिवासी य स ब्रह्मबन्धुभिर्जायते स मागध देशीयब्रह्मबन्धु तस्मै दद्यु । अपरे तु मागध गेयमाहुः । तत्र यो देशीय ईपदसमाप्तौ देशीय इत्युच्यते तस्मै दद्यु ॥

All the Vratyas should bestow all the belongings of the Vratyas (as enumerated above) upon an inferior Brahman who has been omitting, for long, Sandhyopasana and who hails from Magadha According to some 'māgadha' refers to 'Geya'

(25) अकिरतेभ्यो वा व्रात्यचरणात्

Or (the belongings of the Vrātyas should be given away to) those who have not yet abandoned Vrātya practices.

(26) तेष्वेव मृजाना यन्तीति श्रुतेः (Tāṇḍya 17-1-16)

तेषु मास्येषु पापिष्वेव पापं मृजानाः शोधयन्तो यान्ति पूततां प्राप्नुवन्ति इति श्रवणात् ।

(27) of Kashi—त्रयस्त्रिंशत् क्षतं दक्षिणां दधुः

N. सर्वे मास्यागादधुः—

(28) द्विगुणागृहपतिरित्येके ।

N. द्विगुणा गा—

(29) मास्यस्तोमेनेष्ट्वा मास्यभाषाद्विरमेयुः

Having performed the sacrificial-rites after 'Vrātya-Stoma' they should desist from Vrātya way of life.

(30) व्यवहार्या भवन्ति—

APPENDIX - II

Relevant extracts from
the Panchavimśa Brāhmaṇa
(or the Tān. B)
Translated by Caland

- (1) XVII ;
- (ii) Relevant portions re : Rudra.

**“Pañcavims’a Brāhmaṇa” or Tāndya
Mahā Br.**

Chapter 17.

XVII. 1. (Page 454)

1. The Gods, forsooth, went to the world of heavens; of them the adherents of ‘the God’ were left behind (on earth), leading a Vrātya life. They came to the spot whence the gods were gone to the world of heaven. (But) they found neither that Stoma nor that metre by means of which they might reach them. Then the Gods said to the Maruts : ‘Deliver ye to these that Stoma, that metre, by means of which they may reach us.’ To them they (the Maruts) delivered that Sixteen-Versed Stoma, (which) cryptically (is) the anuṣṭubh. Thereupon they reached them.

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[*Note* :—It is said in Jaim-Bra-that the Vrātyas did not reach the world of heaven, because they *had offended either that God which blows here (the wind) or the mighty God (isānām devam i. e. Rudram)* The meaning of the expression “*Vrātyān pravassanti*” is unknown. Perhaps *Vrātyām pravassanti* is elliptic for *Vrātyām vasatīn pravassanti* “leading the life of a joined group” from Vrāta].

2. Those who lead the life of a joined group, are destitute, left behind. For they neither practise the study of the veda nor do they plough or trade. It is by the Sixteen-Versed Stoma that this can be reached.

3. This is a stoma of the Maruts—The Smaller metres belong to the Maruts.

4. He shifts the Kakubh (Verse and Sāmans chanted on it) to the fore-part; in that, at the place of the kakubh, this dvi-padā (verse) is applied, he, thereby, makes them prosper in regard to their own nature.

5. (The verses, beginning) : 'For, O Indra who lovest the chants,' are (of) unequal metre. The joined group is unequal, as it were. He makes them equal (by applying the verses of this metre).

6. On these (verses) the dyautāna (-sāman) (is chanted as third Pṛṣṭha-Land).

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7. Dyutāna, who belonged to the Marutas, was their (of the Vrātyas) "Householder." They (the Vrātya) performed this (Vrātya)—Stoma and all of them came to prosperity. That there is the sāman, is for prospering.

8. If they were to undertake (i. e. to chant) the finale "expressedly," only the Grhpati would prosper and he would repel the others (from prosperity). By the fact, (however), that they undertake it "unexpressedly", he firmly establishes all of them (i. e. all the other Vrātyas) in prosperity or in the welfare.

[Note :—Anirukta Nidhana refers to all the deities and all the Vrātyās).

9. Swallowing poison are those, who eat foreign food as Brāhman's food, (Vide-2-Baudh—XVIII. 24 अवयदं ब्राह्मणं वदन्ति दीक्षितं वादस्य तद्वपुः), who call good words bad, who use to strike the guiltless with a stick, who, though being not initiated speak the speech of the initiated. The guilt of these may be removed by the Sixteen-Versed Stoma. That (in this rite) there are four Sixteen-Versed (Stomas), there by, they are freed from their guilt.

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10. (The verses, beginning) : 'The God who bestoweth wealth, must be taken for agnistoma Sāman; he establishes them (Vrātyas) among the deities.

11. But they (the Theologians) say also : 'It should be applied on the Satobṛhati (Verses), beginning. 'The progress-gaining has shown himself.' A joined group is unequal, as it were; he makes all of them equally elevated (Sato bṛhatar).

12 About this (matter) they (other theologians) say
The metre Satobrhata is loose, as it were and) shaking it
(agnistoma laud) must, (therefore, rather) be performed on
the verses 'The god who bestoweth wealth'

13 'Firmly established (on the contrary) is the brhata
with its repeated verse quarter In that he begins a verse
quarter anew, therefore, the (suckling) child longs after its
mother

14 A turban, a goad, a bow without arrow, a board-cove-
red rough Vehicle, a garment with black fringes, two goat-
skins, one white, one black, a silver ornament (worn around
the neck), (all) that is (the equipment) of the Grhpati

[Note —The meaning of *Jyāhroda*—is unknown to the
sūtrakāras—According to Baudhayan—The Vratyas are provi-
ded with a bow and three arrows in leathern of quivers)

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15 The other (Vratyas) have (upper garments) with red
borders and corded fringes, with strings at each side, each of
them has a pair of shoes and a doubly joined goat's hides

16 This is the possession of the Vratyas, on him, to
whom they bestow (this possession), they transfer (their
guilt or unworthiness, so that henceforth they are qualified
to take part in the sacrifice of the Aryas)

17 Each of them of brings to their Grhpati thirty three
(cows) For thirty three adherents of 'the God' had come
(through this Vratya Stoma) to prospering (So this rite serves
for reaching prosperity—

XVII 2—

1 Now (follows the description of) the (Vratya-Stoma)
with Six Sixteen Versed (Stotras), This (rite) should be per-
formed by those, who base (and) censured, lead a Vratya life

2 One after another they are siezed by bad fortune who,
being (base) and censured, lead a Vratya life In that there
are Six sixteen Versed Stotras, thereby, they are delivered from
bad fortune

3 In that the agnistoma (—Laud) is twenty-one Versed, the twenty-one Versed Stoma being a firm support, they are firmly supported even in the middle of the sacrifice.

4. It is an Ukthya (—rite); the Uktha (—Laud) are Cattle : *it is the Cattle that leads the base to superiority*. Through Cattle, he leads them to superiority.

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XVII. 3.

1. Now, the (Vrātya-Stoma) with two Sixteen-Versed (Stotras). This would be performed by those, who, being the youngest, lead a Vrātya-life.

2. Destitute, left behind are those, who, being the youngest, lead a Vrātya-life. In that the Pavamāna (—lauds) are Nine-Versed, the Nine-Versed (Stoma) being the mouth (or chief one) of the Stomas, he (thereby) leads them to the mouth (the chief part) of the sacrifice

3. In that there are two Sixteen-Versed (Lauds), they thereby, are delivered from their bad fortune.

4. The agnistoma (—Laud) is twenty-one Versed. The twenty-one Versed Stoma is a firm support. They are firmly supported at the end of the sacrifice.

XVII. 4.

1. Now, the Stoma for those (Vrātyas) who by old age are precluded from sexual intercourse. This (rite) should be performed by those who, being the oldest, lead a Vrātya-life.

2 From the top they ascend to the top. The Stomas go upwards (increase in number of Verses): in order that they may not fall down—

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3 This (rite) was (once upon a time) performed by those (Vrātyas), who by old age were precluded from sexual intercourse. Their Grhpati was Kusitaka, the son of Samaśravas. Luśakapi, the Son of Khargala, cursed them, saying: "They are fallen off; they have applied two smaller Lauds" In consequence thereof none of the descendants of Kusitaka amounts to much, for they have fallen off from the sacrifice.

Note 1—[In Jaim-Brh-II 226 " "Now the (Vrātya-Stoma) of the Aisikapāvas, who had Kusitaka as their Grhpati, a Sacrifice of which the pavamāna-laud are Sixteen-Versed" etc. In *Nidansutra* VI II There are two kinds of Vrātyas, the Sīrsādīs and the Aisikayāvis For the Sīrsādīs, he should apply (i e chant) the agnistoma Saman or Satobrhatī (verses)—thus says Dhananjay These they call the older ones For Aisikayāvis (he should chant it) on pragāthabrhatī (verses)—Dhananjay defends the manner of Kausitakins]

Page 620 [Sixty-One-day-rite]

XXIV. 18

1. (b) This the Sixty-one-day-rite of the Vratyas, the adherents of 'the God'.

2 The Vrātyas, the adherents of 'the God', held a sacrificial session with Buddha as their Sthāpati They consecrated themselves without having previously begged of king Varuna a place for divine worship King Varuna cursed them "I preclude you from a—

Page 621.

share in the sacrifice Ye shall not know the path leading to the Gods" Therefore, they (the others, other priests) do not take sacrificial substance (rice, barley etc) nor (a draught) Soma for them (to sacrifice it on their behalf)

Note —[Here Sthāpati seems to occupy the place of Grhpati The Vrātyas were not willing to beg a devayajana of Varuna, precisely because they were adherents of "Deva" and not of the usual gods]

3 Now, at that time, there was neither juice in the herbs nor butter in the milk nor fat in the flesh nor hair on the skin nor leaves on the trees, but since the Vratyas, the adherents of the Gods, performed this Sixty-one day-rite, since that time all these (Viz herbs, milk, flesh etc.) were united with these potencies and were full of lustre, full of juice

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4 They (the Vratyas) thrive in all ways They who undertake these (days) (who perform this rite), thrive in all ways

About "Rudra" in Connectoin with the Vratyas

XIV 9 12

This God, forsooth, they call "the hunter". By means of this (Śāmana) he attained the supremacy over both kinds of animal. He who in lauding has applied the mārṅiyava (-Śāmana), attains the supremacy over both kinds of animal.

[1—The name Rudra is avoided. The mārṅiyava Śāmansas are also called "the chants of Rudra"—

2—That live in the village and that live in the wilds (*J Br.*)]

XXI 2 9.

(Note 4)—We read in *J. Br.* II 254—'The god addressed the mighty god (isānām Devam i. e. Rudra) "Thou art the most pre-eminent of us" Deva as a designation for Rudra is common.

Also refer —*Alt Brah* III. 34 3.

VI 2 5

The thirty-three fold (Stoma), forsooth, is (equal) the deities : the eight vasus, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Ādityas, Prajapati and Vasatkāra are thirty second and thirty third.

VI 5. 19

Turned to the east they seat themselves near it (thinking) • 'we will, at the beginning of the Sacrifice, undertake are function turned towards the east

VI 5 20.

The easterly region, forsooth is the unconquerable one of the chanters, that they push the *dronakalāśa* in easterly direction, is for conquering (this) region

VI 6 1

Having laid together the pressing stones, they shove on them the *dronakalāśa*. The pressing stones are the peasantry,

Soma is the food, the *dronakalasa* is the nobility By shoving the *dronakalasa* on the pressing stones, *they raise the nobility over the peasantry (i.e. they make the peasantry, the people, the vaisyas subject to the baron, the Kshatriya)* (Here we have the earliest example of the rise of feudalism in the early Brahmanical literature—RKC)

VII 7 16

The gods divided the domestic animals among themselves, they excluded Rudra¹; he fixed his looks on them during the laud of the Vamadevya²

Note —1—In *Sat Br XII 7 3 20*—Rudra is the ruler of cattle

2—Vamadevya is cattle at the moments of its chanting Rudra hopes to obtain it as he was excluded a share

VIII 5 6

With the Asuras (once) was the whole sacrifice The Gods saw the vajñayajñiya By means of (the words) 'by sacrifice on sacrifice in honour of Agni' they took from the Agnihotra, (by the words) 'and by hymn on hymn in honour of the skilful', the full and new moon sacrifices, by (the words) continually we (will extol) the immortal jatvedas', the seasonal sacrifices' and by (the words) 'as a dear friend I will extol', the sacrifice of Soma

VIII 9 15

Gods having expelled Asura, ascended the world of heaven

XIII 9 23

By means of Varuna Samana Varuna attained supremacy—

Note —Rudra consecrated him to kingship

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